FOR THE [illegible] OF THE
HOME DEPT
[illegible] GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

THE ILIAD

OF

HOMER,

TRANSLATED BY A. POPE.

A NEW EDITION.

ADORNED WITH PLATES.

VOLUME I.

London:

PRINTED FOR F. J. DU ROVERAY,

By T. Bensley, Bolt Court;

AND SOLD BY J. AND A. ARCH, CORNHILL, AND

E. LLOYD, HARLEY STREET.

1805.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Notes upon Homer were evidently written, as Dr. Johnson observes, "to swell the volumes;" yet are they, upon the whole, a valuable addition to Pope's version. In endeavouring to attain our object, which consists of elegance combined with accuracy, we have found it expedient to curtail some, and omit a few entirely; but we trust the reader will find every thing essential preserved: indeed we have been surprised to find the Notes contain so much extraneous matter, with many repetitions; to say nothing of the unseasonable levity displayed in some, which has been justly condemned, as an unworthy accompaniment to the writings of Homer.

The preliminary Essay, written by Parnell, is in general so harsh and obscure, notwithstanding the pains Pope is said to have taken in correcting it, that we wish we could have omitted it with the same propriety: but it is referred to, both in the Preface and Notes, and, to those who have the patience to wade through it, will not be found wholly devoid of interest.

Upon the merit of the embellishments annexed to these volumes it is not for us to decide. We shall only say, that no pains or expense have been spared to render them worthy of the great original, and to justify at the same time the confidence reposed in us. In estimating our performance, it must, however, be remembered that the task we have undertaken is a very arduous one; so much so as perhaps to entitle us to a share of praise for the mere attempt.

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PREFACE.

HOMER is universally allowed to have had the greatest invention of any writer whatever. The praise of judgment Virgil has justly contested with him, and others may have their pretensions as to particular excellencies; but his invention remains yet unrivalled. Nor is it a wonder if he has ever been acknowledged the greatest of poets, who most excelled in that which is the very foundation of poetry. It is the invention that in different degrees distinguishes all great geniuses: the utmost stretch of human study, learning, and industry, which masters every thing besides, can never attain to this. It furnishes art with all her materials, and without it, judgment itself can at best but 'steal wisely:' for art is only like a prudent steward that lives on managing the riches of nature. Whatever praises may be given to works of judgment, there is not even a single beauty in them to which the invention must not contribute: as in the most regular gardens, art can only reduce the beauties of nature to more regularity, and such a figure, which the common eye may better take in, and is therefore more entertained with. And perhaps the

reason why common critics are inclined to prefer a judicious and methodical genius to a great and fruitful one, is, because they find it easier for themselves to pursue their observations through an uniform and bounded walk of art, than to comprehend the vast and various extent of nature.

Our author's work is a wild paradise, where if we cannot see all the beauties so distinctly as in an ordered garden, it is only because the number of them is infinitely greater. It is like a copious nursery which contains the seeds and first productions of every kind, out of which those who followed him have but selected some particular plants, each according to his fancy, to cultivate and beautify. If some things are too luxuriant, it is owing to the richness of the soil; and if others are not arrived to perfection or maturity, it is only because they are overrun and oppressed by those of a stronger nature.

It is to the strength of this amazing invention we are to attribute that unequalled fire and rapture which is so forcible in Homer, that no man of a true poetical spirit is master of himself while he reads him. What he writes is of the most animated nature imaginable; every thing moves, every thing lives, and is put in action. If a council be called, or a battle

fought, you are not coldly informed of what was said or done as from a third person; the reader is hurried out of himself by the force of the poet's imagination, and turns in one place to a hearer, in another to a spectator. The course of his verses resembles that of the army he describes,

Οἱ δ' ἀῤ ἰσαν, ὡσει τε πυρι χθων πασα νεμοιτο·

'They pour along like a fire that sweeps the whole earth before it.' It is however remarkable that his fancy, which is every where vigorous, is not discovered immediately at the beginning of his poem in its fullest splendour: it grows in the progress both upon himself and others, and becomes on fire, like a chariot-wheel, by its own rapidity. Exact disposition, just thought, correct elocution, polished numbers, may have been found in a thousand; but this poetical fire, this 'vivida vis animi,' in a very few. Even in works where all those are imperfect or neglected, this can overpower criticism, and make us admire even while we disapprove. Nay, where this appears, though attended with absurdities, it brightens all the rubbish about it, till we see nothing but its own splendour. This fire is discerned in Virgil, but discerned as through a glass, reflected from

Homer, more shining than fierce, but every where equal and constant: in Lucan and Statius it bursts out in sudden, short, and interrupted flashes: in Milton it glows like a furnace kept up to an uncommon ardour by the force of art: in Shakespear it strikes before we are aware, like an accidental fire from heaven: but in Homer, and in him only, it burns every where clearly, and every where irresistibly.

I shall here endeavour to show how this vast invention exerts itself in a manner superior to that of any poet through all the main constituent parts of his work; as it is the great and peculiar characteristic which distinguishes him from all other authors.

This strong and ruling faculty was like a powerful star, which, in the violence of its course, drew all things within its vortex. It seemed not enough to have taken in the whole circle of arts, and the whole compass of nature, to supply his maxims and reflections; all the inward passions and affections of mankind, to furnish his characters; and all the outward forms and images of things for his descriptions: but wanting yet an ampler sphere to expatiate in, he opened a new and boundless walk for his imagination, and created a world for himself in the invention of fable. That which Aristotle

calls the 'soul of poetry,' was first breathed into it by Homer. I shall begin with considering him in this part, as it is naturally the first; and I speak of it both as it means the design of a poem, and as it is taken for fiction.

Fable may be divided into the probable, the allegorical, and the marvellous. The probable fable is the recital of such actions as, though they did not happen, yet might, in the common course of nature; or of such as, though they did, become fables by the additional episodes and manner of telling them. Of this sort is the main story of an epic poem, 'the return of Ulysses, the settlement of the Trojans in Italy,' or the like. That of the Iliad is the 'anger of Achilles,' the most short and single subject that ever was chosen by any poet. Yet this he has supplied with a vaster variety of incidents and events, and crowded with a greater number of councils, speeches, battles, and episodes of all kinds, than are to be found even in those poems whose schemes are of the utmost latitude and irregularity. The action is hurried on with the most vehement spirit, and its whole duration employs not so much as fifty days. Virgil, for want of so warm a genius, aided himself by taking in a more extensive subject, as well as a greater length of time, and

contracting the design of both Homer's poems into one, which is yet but a fourth part as large as his. The other epic poets have used the same practice, but generally carried it so far as to superinduce a multiplicity of fables, destroy the unity of action, and lose their readers in an unreasonable length of time. Nor is it only in the main design that they have been unable to add to his invention, but they have followed him in every episode and part of story. If he has given a regular catalogue of an army, they all draw up their forces in the same order. If he has funeral games for Patroclus, Virgil has the same for Anchises; and Statius (rather than omit them) destroys the unity of his action for those of Archemorus. If Ulysses visit the shades, the Æneas of Virgil and Scipio of Silius are sent after him. If he be detained from his return by the allurements of Calypso, so is Æneas by Dido, and Rinaldo by Armida. If Achilles be absent from the army on the score of a quarrel through half the poem, Rinaldo must absent himself just as long on the like account. If he gives his hero a suit of celestial armour, Virgil and Tasso make the same present to theirs. Virgil has not only observed this close imitation of Homer, but where he had not led the way, supplied the want from

other Greek authors. Thus the story of Sinon and the taking of Troy was copied (says Macrobius) almost word for word from Pisander, as the loves of Dido and Æneas are taken from those of Medea and Jason in Apollonius; and several others in the same manner.

To proceed to the allegorical fable.—If we reflect upon those innumerable knowledges, those secrets of nature and physical philosophy, which Homer is generally supposed to have wrapped up in his allegories, what a new and ample scene of wonder may this consideration afford us? How fertile will that imagination appear, which was able to clothe all the properties of elements, the qualifications of the mind, the virtues and vices, in forms and persons; and to introduce them into actions agreeable to the nature of the things they shadowed? This is a field in which no succeeding poets could dispute with Homer; and whatever commendations have been allowed them on this head, are by no means for their invention in having enlarged his circle, but for their judgment in having contracted it. For when the mode of learning changed in following ages, and science was delivered in a plainer manner, it then became as reasonable in the more modern poets to lay it aside, as it was in Homer

to make use of it. And perhaps it was no unhappy circumstance for Virgil, that there was not in his time that demand upon him of so great an invention as might be capable of furnishing all those allegorical parts of a poem.

The marvellous fable includes whatever is supernatural, and especially the machines of the gods. If Homer was not the first who introduced the deities (as Herodotus imagines) into the religion of Greece, he seems the first who brought them into a system of machinery for poetry, and such a one as makes its greatest importance and dignity: for we find those authors who have been offended at the literal notion of the gods, constantly laying their accusation against Homer as the chief support of it. But whatever cause there might be to blame his machines in a philosophical or religious view, they are so perfect in the poetic, that mankind have been ever since contented to follow them: none have been able to enlarge the sphere of poetry beyond the limits he has set: every attempt of this nature has proved unsuccessful; and after all the various changes of times and religions, his gods continue to this day the gods of poetry.

We come now to the characters of his persons; and here we shall find no author has ever

drawn so many, with so visible and surprising a variety, or given us such lively and affecting impressions of them. Every one has something so singularly his own, that no painter could have distinguished them more by their features, than the poet has by their manners. Nothing can be more exact than the distinctions he has observed in the different degrees of virtues and vices. The single quality of courage is wonderfully diversified in the several characters of the Iliad. That of Achilles is furious and intractable; that of Diomede forward, yet listening to advice and subject to command: that of Ajax is heavy, and self-confiding; of Hector, active and vigilant: the courage of Agamemnon is inspirited by love of empire and ambition, that of Menelaus mixed with softness and tenderness for his people: we find in Idomeneus a plain direct soldier, in Sarpedon a gallant and generous one. Nor is this judicious and astonishing diversity to be found only in the principal quality which constitutes the main of each character, but even in the under-parts of it, to which he takes care to give a tincture of that principal one. For example: the main characters of Ulysses and Nestor consist in wisdom; and they are distinct in this, that the wisdom of one is artificial and various, of the

other natural, open, and regular. But they have, besides, characters of courage; and this quality also takes a different turn in each from the difference of his prudence; for one in the war depends still upon caution, the other upon experience. It would be endless to produce instances of these kinds. The characters of Virgil are far from striking us in this open manner; they lie in a great degree hidden and undistinguished; and where they are marked most evidently, affect us not in proportion to those of Homer. His characters of valour are much alike; even that of Turnus seems no way peculiar but as it is in a superior degree; and we see nothing that differences the courage of Mnestheus from that of Sergesthus, Cloanthus, or the rest. In like manner it may be remarked of Statius's heroes, that an air of impetuosity runs through them all; the same horrid and savage courage appears in his Capaneus, Tydeus, Hippomedon, &c. They have a parity of character, which makes them seem brothers of one family. I believe when the reader is led into this track of reflection, if he will pursue it through the epic and tragic writers, he will be convinced how infinitely superior in this point the invention of Homer was to that of all others.

The speeches are to be considered as they flow from the characters; being perfect or defective as they agree or disagree with the manners of those who utter them. As there is more variety of characters in the Iliad, so there is of speeches, than in any other poem. 'Every thing in it has manners' (as Aristotle expresses it); that is, every thing is acted or spoken. It is hardly credible in a work of such length how small a number of lines are employed in narration. In Virgil the dramatic part is less in proportion to the narrative; and the speeches often consist of general reflections or thoughts, which might be equally just in any person's mouth upon the same occasion. As many of his persons have no apparent characters, so many of his speeches escape being applied and judged by the rule of propriety. We oftener think of the author himself when we read Virgil, than when we are engaged in Homer: all which are the effects of a colder invention, that interests us less in the action described: Homer makes us hearers, and Virgil leaves us readers.

If in the next place we take a view of the sentiments, the same presiding faculty is eminent in the sublimity and spirit of his thoughts. Longinus has given his opinion, that it was in this part Homer principally excelled. What

were alone sufficient to prove the grandeur and excellence of his sentiments in general, is, that they have so remarkable a parity with those of the Scripture: Duport, in his Gnomologia Homerica, has collected innumerable instances of this sort. And it is with justice an excellent modern writer allows, that if Virgil has not so many thoughts that are low and vulgar, he has not so many that are sublime and noble; and that the Roman author seldom rises into very astonishing sentiments where he is not fired by the Iliad.

If we observe his descriptions, images, and similes, we shall find the invention still predominant. To what else can we ascribe that vast comprehension of images of every sort, where we see each circumstance of art and individual of nature summoned together by the extent and fecundity of his imagination; to which all things, in their various views, presented themselves in an instant, and had their impressions taken off to perfection at a heat? Nay, he not only gives us the full prospects of things, but several unexpected peculiarities and side-views, unobserved by any painter but Homer. Nothing is so surprising as the descriptions of his battles: which take up no less than half the Iliad, and are supplied with so vast a

variety of incidents, that no one bears a likeness to another; such different kinds of deaths, that no two heroes are wounded in the same manner; and such a profusion of noble ideas, that every battle rises above the last in greatness, horror, and confusion. It is certain there is not near that number of images and descriptions in any epic poet; though every one has assisted himself with a great quantity out of him: and it is evident of Virgil especially, that he has scarce any comparisons which are not drawn from his master.

If we descend from hence to the expression, we see the bright imagination of Homer shining out in the most enlivened forms of it. We acknowledge him the father of poetical diction; the first who taught that 'language of the gods' to men. His expression is like the colouring of some great masters, which discovers itself to be laid on boldly, and executed with rapidity. It is indeed the strongest and most glowing imaginable, and touched with the greatest spirit. Aristotle had reason to say, he was the only poet who had found out 'living words:' there are in him more daring figures and metaphors than in any good author whatever. An arrow is 'impatient' to be on the wing, a weapon 'thirsts' to drink the blood of an enemy, and

the like. Yet his expression is never too big for the sense, but justly great in proportion to it. It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which rises with it, and forms itself about it: and in the same degree that a thought is warmer, an expression will be brighter; as that is more strong, this will become more perspicuous: like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude and refines to a greater clearness, only as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense.

To throw his language more out of prose, Homer seems to have affected the compound-epithets. This was a sort of composition peculiarly proper to poetry; not only as it heightened the diction, but as it assisted and filled the numbers with greater sound and pomp, and likewise conduced in some measure to thicken the images. On this last consideration I cannot but attribute these also to the fruitfulness of his invention; since (as he has managed them) they are a sort of supernumerary pictures of the persons or things to which they are joined. We see the motion of Hector's plumes in the epithet Κορυθαιολος, the landscape of mount Neritus in that of Ευνοσιφυλλος, and so of others; which particular images could not have been insisted upon so long as to express

them in a description (though but of a single line) without divesting the reader too much from the principal action or figure. As a metaphor is a short simile, one of these epithets is a short description.

Lastly, if we consider his versification, we shall be sensible what a share of praise is due to his invention in that also. He was not satisfied with his language as he found it settled in any one part of Greece, but searched through its different dialects with this particular view, to beautify and perfect his numbers: he considered these as they had a greater mixture of vowels or consonants, and accordingly employed them as the verse required either a greater smoothness or strength. What he most affected was the Ionic; which has a peculiar sweetness from its never using contractions, and from its custom of resolving the diphthongs into two syllables; so as to make the words open themselves with a more spreading and sonorous fluency. With this he mingled the Attic contractions, the broader Doric, and the feebler Æolic, which often rejects its aspirate, or takes off its accent; and completed this variety by altering some letters with the license of poetry. Thus his measures, instead of being fetters to his sense, were always in readiness to run along

with the warmth of his rapture, and even to give a farther representation of his notions, in the correspondence of their sounds to what they signified. Out of all these he has derived that harmony which makes us confess he had not only the richest head, but the finest ear in the world. This is so great a truth, that whoever will but consult the tune of his verses, even without understanding them (with the same sort of diligence as we daily see practised in the case of Italian operas), will find more sweetness, variety, and majesty of sound, than in any other language or poetry. The beauty of his numbers is allowed by the critics to be copied but faintly by Virgil himself, though they are so just to ascribe it to the nature of the Latin tongue: indeed the Greek has some advantages both from the natural sound of its words, and the turn and cadence of its verse, which agree with the genius of no other language. Virgil was very sensible of this, and used the utmost diligence in working up a more intractable language to whatsoever graces it was capable of; and in particular never failed to bring the sound of his line to a beautiful agreement with its sense. If the Grecian poet has not been so frequently celebrated on this account as the Roman, the only reason is, that fewer

critics have understood one language than the other. Dionysius of Halicarnassus has pointed out many of our author's beauties in this kind, in his treatise of the Composition of Words; and others will be taken notice of in the course of my notes. It suffices at present to observe of his numbers, that they flow with so much ease, as to make one imagine Homer had no other care than to transcribe as fast as the muses dictated; and at the same time with so much force and inspiriting vigour, that they awaken and raise us like the sound of a trumpet. They roll along as a plentiful river, always in motion, and always full; while we are borne away by a tide of verse, the most rapid, and yet the most smooth imaginable.

Thus on whatever side we contemplate Homer, what principally strikes us is his invention. It is that which forms the character of each part of his work; and accordingly we find it to have made his fable more extensive and copious than any other, his manners more lively and strongly marked, his speeches more affecting and transported, his sentiments more warm and sublime, his images and descriptions more full and animated, his expression more raised and daring, and his numbers more rapid and various. I hope, in what has been said of Virgil, with re-

gard to any of these heads, I have no way derogated from his character. Nothing is more absurd or endless, than the common method of comparing eminent writers by an opposition of particular passages in them, and forming a judgment from thence of their merit upon the whole. We ought to have a certain knowledge of the principal character and distinguishing excellence of each: it is in that we are to consider him, and in proportion to his degree in that we are to admire him. No author or man ever excelled all the world in more than one faculty; and as Homer has done this in invention, Virgil has in judgment. Not that we are to think Homer wanted judgment, because Virgil had it in a more eminent degree; or that Virgil wanted invention, because Homer possessed a larger share of it: each of these great authors had more of both than perhaps any man besides, and are only said to have less in comparison with one another. Homer was the greater genius, Virgil the better artist. In one we most admire the man, in the other the work. Homer hurries and transports us with a commanding impetuosity; Virgil leads us with an attractive majesty: Homer scatters with a generous profusion; Virgil bestows with a careful magnificence: Homer, like the Nile, pours out his

riches with a boundless overflow; Virgil, like a river in its banks, with a gentle and constant stream. When we behold their battles, methinks the two poets resemble the heroes they celebrate. Homer, boundless and irresistible as Achilles, bears all before him, and shines more and more as the tumult increases: Virgil, calmly daring like Æneas, appears undisturbed in the midst of the action; disposes all about him, and conquers with tranquillity. And when we look upon their machines, Homer seems like his own Jupiter in his terrors, shaking Olympus, scattering the lightnings, and firing the heavens; Virgil, like the same power in his benevolence, counselling with the gods, laying plans for empires, and regularly ordering his whole creation.

But, after all, it is with great parts, as with great virtues, they naturally border on some imperfection; and it is often hard to distinguish exactly where the virtue ends, or the fault begins. As prudence may sometimes sink to suspicion, so may a great judgment decline to coldness; and as magnanimity may run up to profusion or extravagance, so may a great invention to redundancy or wildness. If we look upon Homer in this view, we shall perceive the

chief objections against him to proceed from so noble a cause as the excess of this faculty.

Among these we may reckon some of his marvellous fictions, upon which so much criticism has been spent, as surpassing all the bounds of probability. Perhaps it may be with great and superior souls, as with gigantic bodies, which, exerting themselves with unusual strength, exceed what is commonly thought the due proportion of parts, to become miracles in the whole; and, like the old heroes of that make, commit something near extravagance, amidst a series of glorious and inimitable performances. Thus Homer has his 'speaking horses;' and Virgil his 'myrtles distilling blood;' where the latter has not so much as contrived the easy intervention of a deity to save the probability.

It is owing to the same vast invention, that his similes have been thought too exuberant and full of circumstances. The force of this faculty is seen in nothing more, than in its inability to confine itself to that single circumstance upon which the comparison is grounded: it runs out into embellishments of additional images, which however are so managed as not to overpower the main one. His similes are like pictures, where the principal figure has not

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only its proportion given agreeable to the original, but is also set off with occasional ornaments and prospects. The same will account for his manner of heaping a number of comparisons together in one breath, when his fancy suggested to him at once so many various and correspondent images. The reader will easily extend this observation to more objections of the same kind.

If there are others which seem rather to charge him with a defect or narrowness of genius, than an excess of it, those seeming defects will be found upon examination to proceed wholly from the nature of the times he lived in. Such are his grosser representations of the gods, and the vicious and imperfect manners of his heroes, which will be treated of in the following [a] Essay: but I must here speak a word of the latter, as it is a point generally carried into extremes, both by the censurers and defenders of Homer. It must be a strange partiality to antiquity, to think with Madam Dacier, 'that [b] those times and manners are so much the more excellent, as they are more contrary to ours.' Who can be so prejudiced in

[a] See the articles of Theology and Morality, in the third part of the Essay.

[b] Preface to her Homer.

their favour as to magnify the felicity of those ages, when a spirit of revenge and cruelty, joined with the practice of rapine and robbery, reigned through the world; when no mercy was shown but for the sake of lucre; when the greatest princes were put to the sword, and their wives and daughters made slaves and concubines? On the other side, I would not be so delicate as those modern critics, who are shocked at the servile offices and mean employments in which we sometimes see the heroes of Homer engaged. There is a pleasure in taking a view of that simplicity, in opposition to the luxury of succeeding ages: in beholding monarchs without their guards, princes tending their flocks, and princesses drawing water from the springs. When we read Homer, we ought to reflect that we are reading the most ancient author in the heathen world; and those who consider him in this light will double their pleasure in the perusal of him. Let them think they are growing acquainted with nations and people that are now no more; that they are stepping almost three thousand years back into the remotest antiquity, and entertaining themselves with a clear and surprising vision of things no where else to be found, the only true mirror of that ancient world. By this means alone their greatest

obstacles will vanish; and what usually creates their dislike, will become a satisfaction.

This consideration may farther serve to answer for the constant use of the same epithets to his gods and heroes; such as the far-darting Phœbus, the blue-eyed Pallas, the swift-footed Achilles, &c. which some have censured as impertinent and tediously repeated. Those of the gods depended upon the powers and offices then believed to belong to them; and had contracted a weight and veneration from the rites and solemn devotions in which they were used: they were a sort of attributes with which it was a matter of religion to salute them on all occasions, and which it was an irreverence to omit. As for the epithets of great men, Mons. Boileau is of opinion, that they were in the nature of surnames, and repeated as such; for the Greeks having no names derived from their fathers, were obliged to add some other distinction of each person; either naming his parents expressly, or his place of birth, profession, or the like: as Alexander the son of Philip, Herodotus of Halicarnassus, Diogenes the Cynic, &c. Homer therefore, complying with the custom of his country, used such distinctive additions as better agreed with poetry. And indeed we have something parallel to these in modern

times, such as the names of Harold Harefoot, Edmund Ironside, Edward Long-shanks, Edward the Black Prince, &c. If yet this be thought to account better for the propriety than for the repetition, I shall add a farther conjecture. Hesiod, dividing the world into its different ages, has placed a fourth age between the brazen and the iron one, of 'heroes distinct from other men; a divine race, who fought at Thebes and Troy, are called demi-gods, and live by the care of Jupiter in the islands of the blessed[c].' Now among the divine honours which were paid them, they might have this also in common with the gods, not to be mentioned without the solemnity of an epithet, and such as might be acceptable to them by celebrating their families, actions, or qualities.

What other cavils have been raised against Homer, are such as hardly deserve a reply, but will yet be taken notice of as they occur in the course of the work. Many have been occasioned by an injudicious endeavour to exalt Virgil; which is much the same, as if one should think to raise the superstructure by undermining the foundation: one would imagine by the whole course of their parallels that these cri-

[c] Hesiod, lib. i. v. 155, &c.

tics never so much as heard of Homer's having written first; a consideration which whoever compares these two poets ought to have always in his eye. Some accuse him for the same things which they overlook or praise in the other; as when they prefer the fable and moral of the Æneis to those of the Iliad, for the same reasons which might set the Odyssey above the Æneis; as that the hero is a wiser man, and the action of the one more beneficial to his country than that of the other: or else they blame him for not doing what he never designed; as because Achilles is not as good and perfect a prince as Æneas, when the very moral of his poem required a contrary character: it is thus that Rapin judges in his comparison of Homer and Virgil. Others select those particular passages of Homer which are not so laboured as some that Virgil drew out of them: this is the whole management of Scaliger in his Poetics. Others quarrel with what they take for low and mean expressions, sometimes through a false delicacy and refinement, oftener from an ignorance of the graces of the original; and then triumph in the awkwardness of their own translations: this is the conduct of Perrault in his Parallels. Lastly, there are others, who, pretending to a fairer proceeding, distinguish

between the personal merit of Homer, and that of his work; but when they come to assign the causes of the great reputation of the Iliad, they found it upon the ignorance of his times, and the prejudice of those that followed: and in pursuance of this principle, they make those accidents (such as the contention of the cities, &c.) to be the causes of his fame, which were in reality the consequences of his merit. The same might as well be said of Virgil, or any great author, whose general character will infallibly raise many casual additions to their reputation. This is the method of Mons. de la Motte; who yet confesses upon the whole, that in whatever age Homer had lived, he must have been the greatest poet of his nation, and that he may be said in this sense to be the master even of those who surpassed him.

In all these objections we see nothing that contradicts his title to the honour of the chief invention; and as long as this (which is indeed the characteristic of poetry itself) remains unequalled by his followers, he still continues superior to them. A cooler judgment may commit fewer faults, and be more approved in the eyes of one sort of critics: but that warmth of fancy will carry the loudest and most universal applauses which holds the heart of a reader un-

der the strongest enchantment. Homer not only appears the inventor of poetry, but excels all the inventors of other arts in this, that he has swallowed up the honour of those who succeeded him. What he has done admitted no increase, it only left room for contraction or regulation. He shewed all the stretch of fancy at once; and if he has failed in some of his flights, it was but because he attempted every thing. A work of this kind seems like a mighty tree which rises from the most vigorous seed, is improved with industry, flourishes, and produces the finest fruit; nature and art conspire to raise it; pleasure and profit join to make it valuable: and they who find the justest faults, have only said, that a few branches (which run luxuriant through a richness of nature) might be lopped into form to give it a more regular appearance.

Having now spoken of the beauties and defects of the original, it remains to treat of the translation, with the same view to the chief characteristic. As far as that is seen in the main parts of the poem, such as the fable, manners, and sentiments, no translator can prejudice it but by wilful omissions or contractions. As it also breaks out in every particular image, description, and simile, whoever lessens or too

much softens those, takes off from this chief character. It is the first grand duty of an interpreter to give his author entire and unmaimed; and for the rest, the diction and versification only are his proper province; since these must be his own, but the others he is to take as he finds them.

It should then be considered what methods may afford some equivalent in our language for the graces of these in the Greek. It is certain no literal translation can be just to an excellent original in a superior language: but it is a great mistake to imagine (as many have done) that a rash paraphrase can make amends for this general defect; which is no less in danger to lose the spirit of an ancient, by deviating into the modern manners of expression. If there be sometimes a darkness, there is often a light in antiquity, which nothing better preserves than a version almost literal. I know no liberties one ought to take, but those which are necessary for transfusing the spirit of the original, and supporting the poetical style of the translation: and I will venture to say, there have not been more men misled in former times by a servile dull adherence to the letter, than have been deluded in ours by a chimerical insolent hope of raising and improving their author. It

is not to be doubted that the fire of the poem is what a translator should principally regard, as it is most likely to expire in his managing: however, it is his safest way to be content with preserving this to his utmost in the whole, without endeavouring to be more than he finds his author is, in any particular place. It is a great secret in writing to know when to be plain, and when poetical and figurative; and it is what Homer will teach us, if we will but follow modestly in his footsteps. Where his diction is bold and lofty, let us raise ours as high as we can; but where his is plain and humble, we ought not to be deterred from imitating him by the fear of incurring the censure of a mere English critic. Nothing that belongs to Homer seems to have been more commonly mistaken than the just pitch of his style: some of his translators having swelled into fustian, in a proud confidence of the sublime; others sunk into flatness, in a cold and timorous notion of simplicity. Methinks I see these different followers of Homer, some sweating and straining after him by violent leaps and bounds, (the certain signs of false mettle) others slowly and servilely creeping in his train, while the poet himself is all the time proceeding with an unaffected and equal majesty before them. How-

ever, of the two extremes one could sooner pardon frenzy than frigidity: no author is to be envied for such commendations as he may gain by that character of style which his friends must agree together to call simplicity, and the rest of the world will call dullness. There is a graceful and dignified simplicity, as well as a bold and sordid one; which differ as much from each other as the air of a plain man from that of a sloven: it is one thing to be tricked up, and another not to be dressed at all. Simplicity is the mean between ostentation and rusticity.

This pure and noble simplicity is no where in such perfection as in the Scripture and our author. One may affirm, with all respect to the inspired writings, that the divine Spirit made use of no other words but what were intelligible and common to men at that time, and in that part of the world; and, as Homer is the author nearest to those, his style must of course bear a greater resemblance to the sacred books than that of any other writer. This consideration (together with what has been observed of the parity of some of his thoughts) may methinks induce a translator on the one hand to give into several of those general phrases and manners of expression, which have attained a

veneration even in our language from being used in the Old Testament; as, on the other, to avoid those which have been appropriated to the Divinity, and in a manner consigned to mystery and religion.

For a farther preservation of this air of simplicity, a particular care should be taken to express with all plainness those moral sentences and proverbial speeches which are so numerous in this poet. They have something venerable, and, as I may say, oracular, in that unadorned gravity and shortness with which they are delivered: a grace which would be utterly lost by endeavouring to give them what we call a more ingenious (that is, a more modern) turn in the paraphrase.

Perhaps the mixture of some Græcisms and old words after the manner of Milton, if done without too much affectation, might not have an ill effect in a version of this particular work, which most of any other seems to require a venerable antique cast. But certainly the use of modern terms of war and government, such as 'platoon, campaign, junto,' or the like (into which some of his translators have fallen), cannot be allowable; those only excepted without which it is impossible to treat the subjects in any living language.

There are two peculiarities in Homer's diction, which are a sort of marks or moles by which every common eye distinguishes him at first sight; those who are not his greatest admirers look upon them as defects, and those who are seem pleased with them as beauties. I speak of his compound epithets, and of his repetitions. Many of the former cannot be done literally into English without destroying the purity of our language. I believe such should be retained as slide easily of themselves into an English compound, without violence to the ear or to the received rules of composition, as well as those which have received a sanction from the authority of our best poets, and are become familiar through their use of them; such as 'the cloud-compelling Jove,' &c. As for the rest, whenever any can be as fully and significantly expressed in a single word as in a compounded one, the course to be taken is obvious.

Some that cannot be so turned as to preserve their full image by one or two words, may have justice done them by circumlocution; as the epithet *εινοσιφυλλος* to a mountain, would appear little or ridiculous translated literally 'leaf-shaking,' but affords a majestic idea in the periphrasis: 'the lofty mountain shakes his waving

woods.' Others that admit of different significations, may receive an advantage by a judicious variation according to the occasions on which they are introduced. For example, the epithet of Apollo, εκηβολος, or 'far-shooting,' is capable of two explications; one literal in respect of the darts and bow, the ensigns of that god; the other allegorical with regard to the rays of the sun: therefore, in such places where Apollo is represented as a god in person, I would use the former interpretation, and where the effects of the sun are described, I would make choice of the latter. Upon the whole, it will be necessary to avoid that perpetual repetition of the same epithets which we find in Homer, and which, though it might be accommodated (as has been already shewn) to the ear of those times, is by no means so to ours: but one may wait for opportunities of placing them, where they derive an additional beauty from the occasions on which they are employed; and in doing this properly, a translator may at once shew his fancy and his judgment.

As for Homer's repetitions, we may divide them into three sorts; of whole narrations and specches, of single sentences, and of one verse or hemistich. I hope it is not impossible to have such a regard to these, as neither to lose

so known a mark of the author on the one hand, nor to offend the reader too much on the other. The repetition is not ungraceful in those speeches where the dignity of the speaker renders it a sort of insolence to alter his words; as in the messages from gods to men, or from higher powers to inferiors in concerns of state, or where the ceremonial of religion seems to require it, in the solemn forms of prayers, oaths, or the like. In other cases, I believe the best rule is, to be guided by the nearness, or distance, at which the repetitions are placed in the original: when they follow too close, one may vary the expression, but it is a question whether a professed translator be authorised to omit any; if they be tedious, the author is to answer for it.

It only remains to speak of the versification. Homer (as has been said) is perpetually applying the sound to the sense, and varying it on every new subject. This is indeed one of the most exquisite beauties of poetry, and attainable by very few: I know only of Homer eminent for it in the Greek, and Virgil in Latin. I am sensible it is what may sometimes happen by chance, when a writer is warm, and fully possessed of his image: however it may be reasonably believed they designed this, in whose verse it so manifestly appears in a superior de-

gree to all others. Few readers have the ear to be judges of it; but those who have will see I have endeavoured at this beauty.

Upon the whole, I must confess myself utterly incapable of doing justice to Homer. I attempt him in no other hope but that which one may entertain without much vanity, of giving a more tolerable copy of him than any entire translation in verse has yet done. We have only those of Chapman, Hobbes, and Ogilby. Chapman has taken the advantage of an immeasurable length of verse, notwithstanding which, there is scaree any paraphrase more loose and rambling than his. He has frequent interpolations of four or six lines; and I remember one in the thirteenth book of the Odyssey, ver. 312, where he has spun twenty verses out of two. He is often mistaken in so bold a manner, that one might think he deviated on purpose, if he did not in other places of his notes insist so much upon verbal trifles. He appears to have had a strong affectation of extracting new meanings out of his author; insomuch as to promise, in his rhyming preface, a poem of the mysteries he had revealed in Homer: and perhaps he endeavoured to strain the obvious sense to this end. His expression is involved in fustian; a fault for which he was remarkable

in his original writings, as in the tragedy of Bussy d'Amboise, &c. In a word, the nature of the man may account for his whole performance; for he appears from his preface and remarks to have been of an arrogant turn, and an enthusiast in poetry. His own boast of having finished half the Iliad in less than fifteen weeks, shews with what negligence his version was performed. But that which is to be allowed him, and which very much contributed to cover his defects, is a daring fiery spirit that animates his translation, which is something like what one might imagine Homer himself would have writ before he arrived at years of discretion.

Hobbes has given us a correct explanation of the sense in general; but for particulars and circumstances he continually lops them, and often omits the most beautiful. As for its being esteemed a close translation, I doubt not many have been led into that error by the shortness of it, which proceeds not from his following the original line by line, but from the contractions above mentioned. He sometimes omits whole similes and sentences; and is now and then guilty of mistakes, into which no writer of his learning could have fallen, but through carelessness. His poetry, as well as Ogilby's, is too mean for criticism.

It is a great loss to the poetical world that Mr. Dryden did not live to translate the Iliad. He has left us only the first book, and a small part of the sixth; in which if he has in some places not truly interpreted the sense, or preserved the antiquities, it ought to be excused on account of the haste he was obliged to write in. He seems to have had too much regard to Chapman, whose words he sometimes copies, and has unhappily followed him in passages where he wanders from the original. However, had he translated the whole work, I would no more have attempted Homer after him than Virgil: his version of whom (notwithstanding some human errors) is the most noble and spirited translation I know in any language. But the fate of great geniuses is like that of great ministers, though they are confessedly the first in the commonwealth of letters, they must be envied and calumniated only for being at the head of it.

That which in my opinion ought to be the endeavour of any one who translates Homer, is above all things to keep alive that spirit and fire which makes his chief character: in particular places, where the sense can bear any doubt, to follow the strongest and most poetical, as most agreeing with that character; to copy him in

all the variations of his style, and the different modulations of his numbers; to preserve, in the more active or descriptive parts, a warmth and elevation; in the more sedate or narrative, a plainness and solemnity; in the speeches, a fulness and perspicuity; in the sentences, a shortness and gravity: not to neglect even the little figures and turns on the words, nor sometimes the very cast of the periods; neither to omit nor confound any rites or customs of antiquity: perhaps too he ought to include the whole in a shorter compass than has hitherto been done by any translator who has tolerably preserved either the sense or poetry. What I would farther recommend to him is, to study his author rather from his own text, than from any commentaries, how learned soever, or whatever figure they may make in the estimation of the world; to consider him attentively in comparison with Virgil above all the ancients, and with Milton above all the moderns. Next these, the Archbishop of Cambray's Telemachus may give him the truest idea of the spirit and turn of our author; and Bossu's admirable treatise of the Epic poem the justest notion of his design and conduct. But after all, with whatever judgment and study a man may proceed, or with whatever happiness he may per-

form such a work, he must hope to please but a few; those only who have at once a taste of poetry, and competent learning. For to satisfy such as want either, is not in the nature of this undertaking; since a mere modern wit can like nothing that is not modern, and a pedant nothing that is not Greek.

What I have done is submitted to the public; from whose opinions I am prepared to learn; though I fear no judges so little as our best poets, who are most sensible of the weight of this task. As for the worst, whatever they shall please to say, they may give me some concern as they are unhappy men, but none as they are malignant writers. I was guided in this translation by judgments very different from theirs, and by persons for whom they can have no kindness, if an old observation be true, that the strongest antipathy in the world is that of fools to men of wit. Mr. Addison was the first whose advice determined me to undertake this task; who was pleased to write to me upon that occasion in such terms as I cannot repeat without vanity. I was obliged to sir Richard Steele for a very early recommendation of my undertaking to the public. Dr. Swift promoted my interest with that warmth with which he always serves his friend. The humanity and frankness

of sir Samuel Garth are what I never knew wanting on any occasion. I must also acknowledge, with infinite pleasure, the many friendly offices, as well as sincere criticisms, of Mr. Congreve, who had led me the way in translating some parts of Homer. I must add the names of Mr. Rowe and Dr. Parnell, though I shall take a farther opportunity of doing justice to the last, whose good-nature (to give it a great panegyric) is no less extensive than his learning. The favour of these gentlemen is not entirely undeserved by one who bears them so true an affection. But what can I say of the honour so many of the great have done me; while the first names of the age appear as my subscribers, and the most distinguished patrons and ornaments of learning as my chief encouragers? Among these it is a particular pleasure to me to find, that my highest obligations are to such who have done most honour to the name of poet: that his grace the duke of Buckingham was not displeased I should undertake the author to whom he has given (in his excellent Essay) so complete a praise:

'Read Homer once, and you can read no more;
For all books else appear so mean, so poor,
Verse will seem prose: but still persist to read,
And Homer will be all the books you need.'

That the earl of Halifax was one of the first to favour me; of whom it is hard to say whether the advancement of the polite arts is more owing to his generosity or his example. That such a genius as my lord Bolingbroke, not more distinguished in the great scenes of business, than in all the useful and entertaining parts of learning, has not refused to be the critic of these sheets, and the patron of their writer. And that the noble author of the tragedy of Heroic Love, has continued his partiality to me, from my writing pastorals, to my attempting the Iliad. I cannot deny myself the pride of confessing, that I have had the advantage not only of their advice for the conduct in general, but their correction of several particulars of this translation.

I could say a great deal of the pleasure of being distinguished by the earl of Carnarvon; but it is almost absurd to particularize any one generous action in a person whose whole life is a continued series of them. Mr. Stanhope, the present secretary of state, will pardon my desire of having it known that he was pleased to promote this affair. The particular zeal of Mr. Harcourt (the son of the late lord chancellor) gave me a proof how much I am honoured in a share of his friendship. I must attribute to

the same motive that of several others of my friends; to whom all acknowledgments are rendered unnecessary by the privileges of a familiar correspondence; and I am satisfied I can no way better oblige men of their turn, than by my silence.

In short, I have found more patrons than ever Homer wanted. He would have thought himself happy to have met the same favour at Athens that has been shewn me by its learned rival, the University of Oxford. And I can hardly envy him those pompous honours he received after death, when I reflect on the enjoyment of so many agreeable obligations, and easy friendships, which make the satisfaction of life. This distinction is the more to be acknowledged, as it is shewn to one whose pen has never gratified the prejudices of particular parties, or the vanities of particular men. Whatever the success may prove, I shall never repent of an undertaking in which I have experienced the candour and friendship of so many persons of merit; and in which I hope to pass some of those years of youth that are generally lost in a circle of follies, after a manner neither wholly unuseful to others, nor disagreeable to myself.

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

LIFE, WRITINGS, AND LEARNING,

OF

HOMER.

THERE is something in the mind of man which goes beyond bare curiosity, and even carries us on to a shadow of friendship with those great geniuses whom we have known to excel in former ages. Nor will it appear less to any one who considers how much it partakes of the nature of friendship; how it compounds itself of an admiration raised by what we meet with concerning them; a tendency to be farther acquainted with them, by gathering every circumstance of their lives; a kind of complacency in their company, when we retire to enjoy what they have left; an union with them in those sentiments they approve; and an endeavour to defend them when we think they are injuriously attacked, or even sometimes with too partial an affection.

There is also in mankind a spirit of envy or opposition, which makes them uneasy to see others of the same species seated far above them in a sort of perfec-

tion. And this, at least so far as regards the fame of writers, has not always been known to die with a man, but to pursue his remains with idle traditions, and weak conjectures; so that his name, which is not to be forgotten, shall be preserved only to be stained and blotted. The controversy which was carried on between the author and his enemies, while he was living, shall still be kept on foot; not entirely upon his own account, but on theirs who live after him; some being found to praise extravagantly, and others as rashly eager to contradict his admirers. This proceeding, on both sides, gives us an image of the first descriptions of war, such as the Iliad affords; where a hero disputes the field with an army till it is time to die, and then the battle, which we expected to fall of course, is renewed about the body; his friends contending that they may embalm and honour it, his enemies that they may cast it to the dogs and vultures.

There are yet others of a low kind of taste, who, without any malignity to the character of a great author, lessen the dignity of their subject by insisting too meanly upon little particularities. They imagine it the part of an historian to omit nothing they meet with concerning him; and gather every thing, without any distinction, to the prejudice or neglect of the more noble parts of his character: like those trifling painters, or sculptors, who bestow infinite pains and patience upon the most insignificant parts of a figure,

till they sink the grandeur of the whole, by finishing every thing with the neatest want of judgment.

Besides these, there is a fourth sort of men, who pretend to divest themselves of partiality on both sides, and to get above that imperfect idea of their subject, which little writers fall into; who propose to themselves a calm search after truth, and a rational adherence to probability in their historical collections; who neither wish to be led into the fables of superstition, nor are willing to support the injustice of a malignant criticism, but, endeavouring to steer in a middle way, have obtained a character of failing least in the choice of materials for history, though drawn from the darkest ages.

Being therefore to write something concerning a life, which there is little prospect of our knowing, after it has been the fruitless inquiry of so many ages, and which has however been thus differently treated by historians, I shall endeavour to speak of it not as a certainty, but as the tradition, opinion, or collection of authors who have been supposed to write of Homer in these four preceding methods; to which we also shall add some farther conjectures of our own. After his life has been thus rather invented than written, I shall consider him historically as an author, with regard to those works which he has left behind him: in doing which we may trace the degrees of esteem they have obtained in different periods of time, and regulate our present opinion of them by a view of that age in which they were writ.

I. Stories of Homer, which are the effects of extravagant admiration.

I. If we take a view of Homer in those fabulous traditions which the admiration of the ancient heathens has occasioned, we find them running to superstition, and multiplied, and contradictory to one another, in the different accounts which are given with respect to Egypt and Greece, the two native countries of fable.

We have one in [a]Eustathius most strangely framed, which Alexander Paphius has reported concerning Homer's birth and infancy. That 'he was born in Egypt of Damasagoras and Æthra, and brought up by a daughter of Orus, the priest of Isis, who was herself a prophetess, and from whose breasts drops of honey would frequently distil into the mouth of the infant. In the night-time the first sounds he uttered were the notes of nine several birds; in the morning he was found playing with nine doves in the bed: the sibyl, who attended him, used to be seized with a poetical fury, and utter verses, in which she commanded Damasagoras to build a temple to the muses: this he performed in obedience to her inspiration, and related all these things to the child when he was grown up; who, in memory of the doves which played with him during his infancy, has in his works preferred this bird to the honour of bringing ambrosia to Jupiter.'

One would think a story of this nature, so fit for age to talk of, and infancy to hear, were incapable of

[a] Eustathius in Od. 12.

being handed down to us. But we find the tradition again taken up, to be heightened in one part, and carried forward in another. [b] Heliodorus, who had heard of this claim which Egypt put in for Homer, endeavours to strengthen it by naming Thebes for the particular place of his birth. He allows too, that a priest was his reputed father, but that his real father, according to the opinion of Egypt, was Mercury: he says, 'That when the priest was celebrating the rites of his country, and therefore slept with his wife in the temple, the god had knowledge of her, and begot Homer: that he was born with tufts of hair on his [c] thigh, as a sign of unlawful generation, from whence he was called Homer by the nations through which he wandered: that he himself was the occasion why this story of his divine extraction is unknown; because he neither told his name, race, nor country, being ashamed of his exile, to which his reputed father drove him from among the consecrated youths, on account of that mark, which their priests esteemed a testimony of an incestuous birth.'

These are the extravagant stories by which men, who have not been able to express how much they admire him, transcend the bounds of probability to say something extraordinary. The mind that becomes dazzled with the sight of his performances, loses the common idea of a man in the fancied splendour of perfection: it deems nothing less than a god worthy to be

[b] Heliod. Æthiop. l. 3.

[c] Ὁ μηρος, Femur.

his father, nothing less than a prophetess deserving to be his nurse; and, growing unwilling that he should be spoken of in a language beneath its imaginations, delivers fables in the place of history.

But whatever has thus been offered to support the claim of Egypt, they who plead for Greece are not to be accused for coming short of it. Their fancy rose with a refinement as much above that of their masters, as the Greek imagination was superior to that of the Egyptians: their fiction was but a veil, and frequently wrought fine enough to be seen through, so that it hardly hides the meaning it is made to cover from the first glance of the imagination. For a proof of this, we may mention that poetical genealogy which is delivered for Homer's in the Greek [d] treatise of the contention between him and Hesiod, and but little varied by the relation of it in Suidas.

'The poet Linus (say they) was born of Apollo and Thoösa the daughter of Neptune. Pierus of Linus: Oeagrus of king Pierus and the nymph Methone: Orpheus of Oeagrus and the muse Calliope. From Orpheus came Othrys; from him Harmonides; from him Philoterpus; from him Euphemus; from him Epiphrades, who begot Menalops, the father of Dius; Dius had Hesiod the poet and Perses by Pucamede, the daughter of Apollo: then Perses had Mæon, on whose daughter, Crytheis, the river Meles begot Homer.'

Here we behold a wonderful genealogy, contrived

industriously to raise our idea to the highest, where gods, goddesses, muses, kings, and poets, link in a descent; nay, where poets are made to depend, as it were, in clusters upon the same stalk beneath one another. If we consider too that Harmonides is derived from harmony, Philoterpus from love of delight, Euphemus from beautiful diction, Epiphrades from intelligence, and Pucamede from prudence, it may not be improbable but the inventors meant, by a fiction of this nature, to turn such qualifications into persons as were agreeable to his character for whom the line was drawn: so that every thing divine or great will thus come together by the extravagant indulgence of fancy, while admiration turns itself in some to bare fable, in others to allegory.

After this fabuolus tree of his pedigree, we may regularly view him in one passage concerning his birth, which, though it differs in a circumstance from what has been here delivered, yet carrics on the same air, and regards the same traditions. There is a short life of Homer attributed to Plutarch, wherein a third part of Aristotle on Poetry, which is now lost, is quoted for an account of his uncommon birth, in this manner: 'At the time when Neleus, the son of Codrus, led the colony which was sent into Ionia, there was in the island of Io a young girl, compressed by a genius, who delighted to associate with the muses, and share in their consorts. She, finding herself with child, and being touched with the shame of what had happened to her, removed from thence to a place called Ægina.

'There she was taken in an excursion made by robbers, and being brought to Smyrna, which was then under the Lydians, they gave her to Mæon the king, who married her upon account of her beauty. But while she walked on the bank of the river Meles, she brought forth Homer, and expired. The infant was taken by Mæon, and bred up as his son, till the death of that prince.' And from this point of the story the poet is let down into his traditional poverty. Here we see, though he be taken out of the lineage of Meles, where we met him before, he has still as wonderful a rise invented for him; he is still to spring from a demi-god, one who was of a poetical disposition, from whom he might inherit a soul turned to poetry, and receive an assistance of heavenly inspiration.

In his life the most general tradition concerning him is his blindness; yet there are some who will not allow even this to have happened after the manner in which it falls upon other men: chance and sickness are excluded; nothing less than gods and heroes must be visibly concerned about him. Thus we find among the different accounts which Hermias[e] has collected concerning his blindness, that when Homer resolved to write of Achilles, he had an exceeding desire to fill his mind with a just idea of so glorious a hero; wherefore, having paid all due honours at his tomb, he intreats that he may obtain a sight of him. The hero grants his poet's petition, and rises in a glorious suit

[e] Hermias in Phæd. Plat. Leo Allat. de Patr. Hom. c. 10.

of armour, which cast so unsufferable a splendour, that Homer lost his eyes, while he gazed for the enlargement of his notions.

If this be any thing more than a mere fable, one would be apt to imagine it insinuated his contracting a blindness by too intense an application while he wrote his Iliad. But it is a very pompous way of letting us into the knowledge of so short a truth: it looks as if men imagined the lives of poets should be poetically written; that to speak plainly of them, were to speak contemptibly; or that we debase them, when they are placed in less glorious company than those exalted spirits which they themselves have been fond to celebrate. We may however in some measure be reconciled to this last idle fable, for having occasioned so beautiful an episode in the Ambra of Politian. That which does not inform us in a history, may please us in its proper sphere of poetry.

II. Stories of Homer proceeding from envy.

II. Such stories as these have been the effects of a superstitious fondness, and of the astonishment of men at what they consider in a view of perfection. But neither have all the same taste, nor do they equally submit to the superiority of others, nor bear that human nature, which they know to be imperfect, should be praised in an extreme, without opposition. From some principles of this kind have arisen a second sort of stories, which glance at Homer with malignant suppositions, and endeavour to throw a diminishing air over his life,

as a kind of answer to those who sought to aggrandize him injudiciously.

Under this head we may reckon these ungrounded conjectures with which his adversaries asperse the very design and prosecution of his travels, when they insinuate, that they were one continued search after authors who had written before him, and particularly upon the same subject, in order to destroy them, or to rob them of their inventions.

Thus we read in Diodorus Siculus,[f] 'That there was one Daphne, the daughter of Tiresias, who from her inspirations obtained the title of a sibyl. She had a very extraordinary genius, and being made priestess at Delphos, wrote oracles with wonderful elegance, which Homer sought for, and adorned his poems with several of her verses.' But she is placed so far in the fabulous age of the world, that nothing can be averred of her: and as for the verses now ascribed to the Sibyls, they are more modern than to be able to confirm the story; which, as it is universally assented to, discovers that whatever there is in them in common with Homer, the compilers have rather taken from him; perhaps to strengthen the authority of their work by the protection of this tradition.

The next insinuation we hear is from Suidas, that Palamedes, who fought at Troy, was famous for poetry, and wrote concerning that war in the Doric letter which he invented, probably much against Agamem-

[f] Diod. Sicul. l. 4.

non and Ulysses, his mortal enemies. Upon this account some have fancied his works were suppressed by Agamemnon's posterity; or that their entire destruction was contrived and effected by Homer when he undertook the same subject. But surely the works of so considerable a man, when they had been able to bear up so long a time as that which passed between the siege of Troy and the flourishing of Homer, must have been too much dispersed, for one of so mean a condition as he is represented, to have destroyed in every place, though he had been never so much assisted by the vigilant temper of envy. And we may say too, that what might have been capable of raising this principle in him, must be capable of being in some measure esteemed by others, and of having at least one line of it preserved to us as his.

After him, in the order of time, we meet with a whole set of names, to whom the maligners of Homer would have him obliged, without being able to prove their assertion. Suidas mentions Corinnus Iliensis, the secretary of Palamedes, who writ a poem upon the same subject, but no one is produced as having seen it. Tzetzes[g] mentions (and from Johannes Melala only) Sisyphus the Coan, secretary of Teucer, but it is not so much as known if he writ verse or prose. Besides these are, Dictys the Cretan, secretary to Idomeneus, and Dares the Phrygian, an attendant of Hector, who have spurious treatises passing under their

[g] Tzetzes Chil. 5. Hist. 29.

names. From each of these is Homer said to have borrowed his whole argument; so inconsistent are these stories with one another.

The next names we find are, Demodocus, whom Homer might have met at Corcyra; and Phemius, whom he might have met at Ithaca: the one (as Plutarch[h] says) having according to tradition written the War of Troy, the other the Return of the Grecian Captains. But these are only two names of friends, which he is pleased to honour with eternity in his poem; or two different pictures of himself, as author of the Iliad and Odyssey; or entirely the children of his imagination, without any particular allusion. So that his usage here puts me in mind of his own Vulcan in the[i] Iliad: the god had cast two statues, which he endued with the power of motion; and it is said presently after, that he is scarce able to go unless they support him.

It is reported by some, says[k] Ptolemæus Æphæstio, 'That there was before Homer a woman of Memphis, called Phantasia, who writ of the wars of Troy, and the wanderings of Ulysses. Now Homer arriving at Memphis, where she had laid up her works, and getting acquainted with Phanitas, whose business it was to copy the sacred writings, he obtained a sight of these, and followed entirely the scheme she had drawn.' But this is a wild story, which speaks of an Egyptian wo-

[h] Plutarch on Music.

[i] Iliad. xviii.

[k] Ptol. Ep. Excerp. apud Photium, l.

man with a Greek name, and who never was heard of but upon this account. It appears, indeed, from his knowledge of the Egyptian learning, that he was initiated into their mysteries, and, for aught we know, by one Phanitas. But if we consider what the name of the woman signifies, it seems only as if from being used in a figurative expression, it had been mistaken afterwards for a proper name. And then the meaning will be, that having gathered as much information concerning the Grecian and Trojan story as he could be furnished with from the accounts of Egypt, which were generally mixed with fancy and fable, he wrought out his plans of the Iliad and the Odyssey.

We pass all these stories, together with the little Iliad of Siagrus, mentioned by [1] Ælian. But one cannot leave this subject without reflecting on the depreciating humour and odd industry of man; which shews itself in raising such a number of insinuations that clash with each other, and in spiriting up such a crowd of unwarranted names to support them. Nor can we but admire at the contradictory nature of this proceeding; that names of works, which either never were in being, or never worthy to live, should be produced only to persuade us that the most lasting and beautiful poem of the ancients was taken out of them. A beggar might be content to patch up a garment with such shreds as the world throws away, but it is never to be imagined an emperor would make his robes of them.

[1] Ælian. l. 14. c. 23.

After Homer had spent a considerable time in travel, we find him towards his age introduced to such an action as tends to his disparagement. It is not enough to accuse him for spoiling the dead; they raise a living author, by whom he must be baffled in that qualification on which his fame is founded.

There is in [m] Hesiod an account of an ancient poetical contention at the funeral of Amphidamas, in which, he says, he obtained the prize, but does not mention from whom he carried it. There is also among the [n] Hymns ascribed to Homer a prayer to Venus for success in a poetical dispute, but it neither mentions where, nor against whom. But though they have neglected to name their antagonists, others have since taken care to fill up the stories by putting them together. The making two such considerable names in poetry engage, carries an amusing pomp in it, like making two heroes of the first rank enter the lists of combat. And if Homer and Hesiod had their parties among the grammarians, here was an excellent opportunity for Hesiod's favourers to make a sacrifice of Homer. Hence a bare conjecture might spread into a tradition, then the tradition give occasion to an epigram, which is yet extant, and again the epigram (for want of knowing the time it was writ in) be alledged as a proof of that conjecture from whence it sprung. After this a [o] whole treatise was written upon it, which

[m] Hesiod. Op. et dierum, l. 2. v. 272, &c.

[n] Hom. Hymn. 2. ad Venerem.

[o] Ἀγων Ὁμηρου και Ἡσιοδου.

appears not very ancient, because it mentions Adrian: the story agrees in the main with the short account we find in [p] Plutarch, 'That Ganictor, the son of Amphidamas, king of Eubœa, being used to celebrate his father's funeral games, invited from all parts men famous for strength and wisdom. Among these Homer and Hesiod arrived at Chalcis. The king Panidas presided over the contest, which being finished, he decreed the Tripos to Hesiod, with this sentence, That the poet of peace and husbandry better deserved to be crowned, than the poet of war and contention. Whereupon Hesiod dedicated the prize to the muses, with this inscription,

Ἡσιόδος Μούσαις Ἑλικωνίσι τον δ' ἀνέθηκεν,
Ὕμνῳ νικήσας Χαλκίδι θεῖον ἆθλον.

Which are two lines taken from that place in Hesiod where he mentions no antagonist, and altered, that the two names might be brought in, as is evident by comparing them with these,

Ὕμνῳ νικήσαντα φέρειν τρίποδ' ὠτωεῖλα,
Τον μεν Ἐγω Μουσης Ἑλικωνιάδεσσ' ἀνέθηκα.

To answer this story, we may take notice that Hesiod is generally placed after Homer. Grævius, his own commentator, sets him a hundred years lower; and whether he were so or no, yet [q] Plutarch has slightly passed the whole account as a fable. Nay, we

p Plut. Banquet of the seven wise men.

q Plut. Symp. l. 5. § 2.

may draw an argument against it from Hesiod himself: he had a love of fame, which caused him to engage at the funeral games, and which went so far as to make him record his conquest in his own works; had he defeated Homer, the same principle would have made him mention a name that could have secured his own to immortality. A poet who records his glory, would not omit the noblest circumstance, and Homer, like a captive prince, had certainly graced the triumph of his adversary.

Towards the latter end of his life, there is another story invented, which makes him conclude it in a manner altogether beneath the greatness of a genius. We find, in the life said to be written by Plutarch, a tradition, 'That he was warned by an oracle to beware of the "young men's riddle." This remained long obscure to him, till he arrived at the island Iös. There, as he sat to behold the fishermen, they proposed to him a riddle in verse, which he being unable to answer, died for grief.' This story refutes itself, by carrying superstition at one end, and folly at the other. It seems conceived with an air of derision, to lay a great man in the dust after a foolish manner. The same sort of hand might have framed that tale of Aristotle's drowning himself because he could not account for the Euripus: the design is the same, the turn the same; and all the difference, that the great men are each to suffer in his character, the one by a poetical riddle, the other by a philosophical problem. But these are accidents which can only arise from the meanness of pride, or extrava-

gance of madness: a soul enlarged with knowledge (so vastly as that of Homer) better knows the proper stress which is to be laid upon every incident, and the proportion of concern, or carelessness, with which it ought to be affected. But it is the fate of narrow capacities to measure mankind by a false standard, and imagine the great, like themselves, capable of being disconcerted by little occasions; to frame their malignant fables according to this imagination, and to stand detected by it as by an evident mark of ignorance.

III. Stories of Homer proceeding from trifling curiosity.

III. The third manner in which the life of Homer has been written is but an amassing of all the traditions and hints which the writers could meet with, great or little, in order to tell a story of him to the world. Perhaps the want of choice materials might put them upon the necessity; or perhaps an injudicious desire of saying all they could, occasioned the fault. However it be, a life composed of trivial circumstances, which (though it give a true account of several passages) shews a man but little in that light in which he was most famous, and has hardly any thing correspondent to the idea we entertain of him; such a life, I say, will never answer rightly the demand the world has upon an historian. Yet the most formal account we have of Homer is of this nature, I mean that which is said to be collected by Herodotus. It is, in short, an unsupported minute treatise, composed of events which lie within the compass of probability, and be-

long to the lowest sphere of life. It seems to be entirely conducted by the spirit of a grammarian; ever abounding with extempore verses, as if it were to prove a thing so unquestionable as our author's title to rapture; and at the same time the occasions are so poorly invented, that they misbecome the warmth of a poetical imagination. There is nothing in it above the life which a grammarian might lead himself; nay, it is but such a one as they commonly do lead, the highest stage of which is to be 'master of a school.' But because this is a treatise to which writers have had recourse for want of a better, I shall give the following abstract of it.

'Homer was born at Smyrna, about one hundred sixty-eight years after the siege of Troy, and six hundred twenty-two years before the expedition of Xerxes. His mother's name was Crytheis, who proving unlawfully with child, was sent away from Cumæ by her uncle, with Ismenias, one of those who led the colony of Smyrna, then building. A while after, as she was celebrating a festival with other women on the banks of the river Meles, she was delivered of Homer, whom she therefore named Melesigenes. Upon this she left Ismenias, and supported herself by her labour, till Phemius (who taught a school in Smyrna) fell in love with her, and married her. But both dying in process of time, the school fell to Homer, who managed it with such wisdom, that he was universally admired both by natives and strangers. Amongst these latter was Mentes, a master of a ship from Leucadia,

by whose persuasions and promises he gave up his school, and went to travel: with him he visited Spain and Italy, but was left behind at Ithaca upon account of a defluxion in his eyes. During his stay he was entertained by one Mentor, a man of fortune, justice, and hospitality, and learned the principal incidents of Ulysses's life. But at the return of Mentes, he went from thence to Colophon, where, his defluxion renewing, he fell entirely blind. Upon this he could think of no better expedient than to go back to Smyrna, where perhaps he might be supported by those who knew him, and have the leisure to addict himself to poetry. But there he found his poverty increase, and his hopes of encouragement fail; so that he removed to Cumæ, and by the way was entertained for some time at the house of one Tychius, a leather-dresser. At Cumæ his poems were wonderfully admired; but when he proposed to eternize their town if they would allow him a salary, he was answered, that there would be no end of maintaining all the Ὅμηροι, or 'blind men,' and hence he got the name of Homer. From Cumæ he went to Phocæa, where one Thestorides (a schoolmaster also) offered to maintain him if he would suffer him to transcribe his verses: this Homer complying with through mere necessity, the other had no sooner gotten them, but he removed to Chios; there the poems gained him wealth and honour, while the author himself hardly earned his bread by repeating them. At last, some who came from Chios having told the people that

the same verses were published there by a schoolmaster, Homer resolved to find him out. Having therefore landed near that place, he was received by one Glaucus, a shepherd (at whose door he had like to have been worried by dogs), and carried by him to his master at Bollissus, who, admiring his knowledge, intrusted him with the education of his children. Here his praise began to spread, and Thestorides, who heard of his neighbourhood, fled before him. He removed however some time afterwards to Chios, where he set up a school of poetry, gained a competent fortune, married a wife, and had two daughters; the one of which died young, the other was married to his patron at Bollissus. Here he inserted in his poems the names of those to whom he had been most obliged, as Mentes, Phemius, Mentor, and Tychius; and resolving for Athens, he made honourable mention of that city, to prepare the Athenians for a kind reception. But as he went, the ship put in at Samos, where he continued the whole winter, singing at the houses of great men, with a train of boys after him. In spring he went on board again in order to prosecute his journey to Athens, but landing by the way at Iös, he fell sick, died, and was buried on the sea-shore.'

This is the life of Homer ascribed to Herodotus, though it is wonderful it should be so, since it evidently contradicts his own history, by placing Homer six hundred twenty-two years before the expedition of Xerxes; whereas Herodotus himself, who was alive

at the time of that expedition, says, Homer was only four hundred [s] years before him. However, if we can imagine that there may be any thing of truth in the main parts of this treatise, we may gather these general observations from it: that he shewed a great thirst after knowledge, by undertaking such long and numerous travels: that he manifested an unexampled vigour of mind, by being able to write with more fire under the disadvantages of blindness, and the utmost poverty, than any poet after him in better circumstances; and that he had an unlimited sense of fame (the attendant of noble spirits), which prompted him to engage in new travels, both under these disadvantages, and the additional burden of old age.

But it will not perhaps be either improper or difficult to make some conjectures which seem to lay open the foundation from whence the traditions which frame the low lives of Homer have risen. We may consider, that there are no historians of his time (or none handed down to us) who have mentioned him; and that he has never spoken plainly of himself, in those works which have been ascribed to him without controversy. However, an eager desire to know something concerning him has occasioned mankind to labour the point under these disadvantages, and turn on all hands to see if there were any thing left which might have the least appearance of information. Upon the search, they find no remains but his 'name' and

[s] Herod. l. 2.

'works,' and resolve to torture these upon the rack of invention, in order to give some account of the person they belong to.

The first thing therefore they settle is, that what passed for his 'name' must be his 'name' no longer, but an 'additional title' used instead of it. The reason why it was given, must be some accident of his life. They then proceed to consider every thing that the word may imply by its derivation. One finds that Ὁ μηρος signifies a 'thigh;' whence arises the tradition in Heliodorus,[t] that he was banished Egypt for the mark on that part which shewed a spurious birth; and this they imagine ground enough to give him the life of a wanderer. A second finds, that Ὅμηρος signifies an 'hostage,' and then he must be delivered as such in a war (according to Proclus[u]) between Smyrna and Chios. A third can derive the name of Ὁ μη ὁρων, 'non videns,' from whence he must be a 'blind man' (as in the piece ascribed to [w]Herodotus). A fourth brings it from Ὁμως ερειν, 'speaking in council;' and then (as it is in Suidas) he must, by a divine inspiration, declare to the Smyrnæans, that they should war against Colophon. A fifth finds the word may be brought to signify 'following others,' or 'joining himself' to them, and then he must be called Homer for saying (as it is quoted from Aristotle[x] in the life ascribed to Plutarch) that he would Ὁμηρειν, or 'fol-

[t] Hel. l. 8. [u] Procl. vit. Hom. [w] Herod. vit. Hom. [x] Plut. vit. Hom.

low' the Lydians from Smyrna. Thus has the name been turned and winded, enough at least to give a suspicion, that he who got a 'new etymology,' got either a 'new life' of him, or something which he added to the old one.

However, the 'name' itself not affording enough to furnish out a whole life, his 'works' must be brought in for assistance; and it is taken for granted, that where he has not spoken of himself, he lies veiled beneath the persons or actions of those whom he describes. Because he calls a poet by the name of Phemius in his Odyssey, they conclude this [y] Phemius was his master. Because he speaks of Demodocus as another poet who was blind, and frequented palaces, he must be sent about [z] blind, to sing at the doors of rich men. If Ulysses be set upon by dogs at his shepherd's cottage, because this is a low adventure, it is thought to be his own at Bollissus. [a] And if he calls the leather-dresser, who made Ajax's shield, by the name of Tychius, he must have been supported by such an one in his wants: nay, some have been so violently carried into this way of conjecturing, that the bare [b] simile of a woman who works hard for her livelihood, is said to have been borrowed from his mother's condition, and brought as a proof of it. Thus he is still imagined to intend himself; and the fictions of poetry, converted into real facts, are delivered for his life who has assigned them

[y] Herod. vit Hom. [z] Ibid. [a] Ibid.

[b] Vid. M. Dacier's Life of Homer.

to others. All those stories in his works which suit with a mean condition are supposed to have happened to him; though the same way of inference might as well prove him to have acted in a higher sphere, from the many passages that shew his skill in government, and his knowledge of the great parts of life.

There are some other scattered stories of Homer which fall not under these heads, but are however of as trifling a nature; as much unfit for the materials of history, still more ungrounded, if possible, and arising merely from chance, or the humours of men: such is the report we meet with from [c] Heraclides, 'Homer was fined at Athens for a madman;' which seems invented by the disciples of Socrates, to cast an odium upon the Athenians for their consenting to the death of their master, and carries in it something like a declaiming revenge of the schools, as if the world should imagine the one could be esteemed mad, where the other was put to death for being wicked. Such another report is that in [d] Ælian, 'that Homer portioned his daughter with some of his works for want of money;' which looks but like a jest upon a poor wit, which at first might have had an epigrammatist for its father, and been afterwards gravely understood by some painful collector. In short, mankind have laboured heartily about him to no purpose; they have caught up every thing greedily, with that busy mi-

[c] Diogenes Laertius ex Heracl. in vita Socratis.

[d] Ælian. l. 9. cap. 15.

nute curiosity and unsatisfactory inquisitiveness which Seneca calls the 'Disease of the Greeks;' they have puzzled the cause by their attempts to find it out; and, like travellers destitute of a road, yet resolved to make one over unpassable deserts, they superinduce error, instead of removing ignorance.

IV. Probable conjectures concerning Homer.

IV. Whenever any authors have attempted to write the life of Homer, clear from superstition, envy, and trifling, they have grown ashamed of all these traditions. This, however, has not occasioned them to desist from the undertaking; but still the difficulty which could not make them desist has necessitated them, either to deliver the old story with excuses, or else, instead of a life, to compose a treatise partly of criticism, and partly of character; rather descriptive, than supported by action and the air of history.

His time.

They begin with acquainting us, that the time in which he lived has never been fixed beyond dispute, and that the opinions of authors are various concerning it: but the controversy, in its several conjectures, includes a space of years, between the earliest and latest, from twenty-four to about five hundred, after the siege of Troy. Whenever the time was, it seems not to have been near that siege, from his own [e] Invocation of the Muses to recount the catalogue of the ships: 'For

[e] Ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἷον ἀκουόμεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν. Iliad. ii. v. 487.

we,' says he, 'have only heard a rumour, and know nothing particularly.' It is remarked by 'Velleius Paterculus, that it must have been considerably later, from his own confession, that 'mankind was but half as strong in his age as in that he writ of;' which, as it is founded upon a notion of a gradual degeneracy in our nature, discovers the interval to have been long between Homer and his subject. But not to trouble ourselves with entering into all the dry dispute, we may take notice, that the world is inclined to stand by the [g]Arundelian marble, as the most certain computation of those early times; and this, by placing him at the time when Diogenetus ruled in Athens, makes him flourish a little before the olympiads were established; about three hundred years after the taking of Troy, and near a thousand before the Christian era. For a farther confirmation of this, we have some great names of antiquity who give him a cotemporary agreeing with the computation: [h] Cicero says, there was a tradition that Homer lived about the time of Lycurgus. [i] Strabo tells us, it was reported that Lycurgus went to Chios for an interview with him. And

[f] Hic longè à temporibus belli quod composuit, Troici, quàm quidam rentur, abfuit. Nam fermè ante annos 950 floruit, intra mille natus est: quo nomine non est mirandum quòd sæpe illud usurpat, οἵοι νυν βροτοι εισι. Hôc enim ut 'hominum' ita 'sæculorum' notatur differentia. Vell. Paterc. lib. i.

[g] Vide Dacier, Du Pin, &c. concerning the Arundelian marble.

[h] Cicero Qu. Tuscul. l. 5.

[i] Strabo, l. 10.

even [k] Plutarch, when he says Lycurgus received Homer's works from the grandson of that Creophilus with whom he had lived, does not put him so far backward, but that possibly they might have been alive at the same time.

His country.

The next dispute regards his country; concerning which [l] Adrian enquired of the gods, as a question not to be settled by men; and Appion (according to [m] Pliny) raised a spirit for his information. That which has increased the difficulty, is the number of contesting places, of which Suidas has reckoned up nineteen in one breath. But his ancient commentator, [n] Didymus, found the subject so fertile, as to employ a great part of his four thousand volumes upon it. There is a prophecy of the sibyls, that he should be born at Salamis in Cyprus; and then to play an argument of the same nature against it, there is the oracle given to Adrian afterwards, that says he was born in Ithaca. There are customs of Æolia and Egypt cited from his works, to make out by turns and with the same probability, that he belonged to each of them. There was a school shewed for his at Colophon, and a tomb at Iös, both of equal strength to prove he had his birth in either. As for the Athenians, they challenged him as born where they had a colony; or else, in behalf of Greece

[k] Plut. vitâ Lycurgi.

[l] Αγων Ὁμηρου και Ἡσιοδου, of Adrian's Oracle.

[m] Plin. l. 30. cap. 2.

[n] Seneca Ep. 88. concerning Didymus.

in general, and as the metropolis of its learning, they made his name free of their city ('qu. Licinià et Mutià lege,' says [o] Politian), after the manner of that law by which all Italy became free of Rome. All these have their authors to record their titles; but still the weight of the question seems to lie between Smyrna and Chios, which we must therefore take a little more notice of. That Homer was born at Smyrna is endeavoured to be proved by an [p] epigram, recorded to have been under the statue of Pisistratus at Athens; by the reports mentioned in Cicero, Strabo, and A. Gellius; and by the Greek lives, which pass under the names of Herodotus, Plutarch, and Proclus; as also the two that are anonymous. [q] The Smyrnæans built a temple to him, cast medals of him, and grew so possessed of his having been theirs, that it is said they burned Zoilus for affronting them in the person of Homer. On the other hand, the Chians plead the ancient authorities of [r] Simonides and [s] Theocritus for his being born among them. They mention a race they had, called the Homeridæ, whom they reckoned his poste-

[o] Politian. Præf. in Homerum.

[p] Epigram on Pisistratus in the anonymous life before Homer.

[q] Vitruvius Procem. l. 7.

[r] Simonides Frag. de brevitate vitæ, quoting a verse of Homer.

Εν δο καλλιστον Χιος ειπεν ανηρ.

[s] Theocritus in Dioscuris, ad fin.

..... Χιος αοιδος,
Τμνησας Πριαμοιο πολιν και νηας Αχαιων,
Ιλιαδας τε μαχας.

rity; they cast medals of him; they shew to this day an Homærium, or temple of Homer, near Bollissus; and close their arguments with a quotation from the hymn to Apollo (which is acknowledged for Homer's by [t] Thucydides), where he calls himself 'The blind man that inhabits Chios.' The reader has here the sum of the large treatise of Leo Allatius, written particularly on the subject,[u] in which, after having separately weighed the pretensions of all, he concludes for Chios. For my part, I determine nothing in a point of so much uncertainty; neither which of these was honoured with his birth, nor whether any of them was, nor whether each may not have produced his own Homer; since [w] Xenophon says, there were many of the name. But one cannot avoid being surprised at the prodigious veneration for his character, which could engage mankind with such eagerness in a point so little essential; that kings should send to oracles for the inquiry of his birth-place; that critics should be in strife about it; that whole lives of learned men should be employed upon it; that some should write treatises; that others should call up spirits about it; that thus, in short, heaven, earth, and hell, should be sought to, for the decision of a question which terminates in curiosity only.

His parents.

If we endeavour to find the parents of Homer, the search is as fruit-

[t] Thucyd. lib. 3.

[u] Leo Allatius de patriâ Homeri.

[w] Xenophon de Æquivocis.

less. [x] Ephorus had made Mæon to be his father, by a niece whom he defloured; and this has so far obtained as to give him the derivative name of Mæonides. His mother (if we allow the story of Mæon) is called Crytheis: but we are lost again in uncertainty, if we search farther; for Suidas has mentioned Eumetis, or Polycaste; and [y] Pausanias, Clymene, or Themisto; which happens, because the contesting countries find out mothers of their own for him. Tradition has in this case afforded us no more light, than what may serve to shew its shadows in confusion; they strike the sight with so equal a probability, that we are in doubt which to choose, and must pass the question undecided.

His name.

If we inquire concerning his own name, even that is doubted of. He has been called Melesigenes from the river where he was born. Homer has been reckoned an ascititious name, from some accident in his life: the Certamen Homericum calls him once Auletes, perhaps from his musical genius; and [z] Lucian, Tigranes; it may be from a confusion with that Tigranes or [a] Tigretes, who was brother of queen Artemisia, and whose name has been so far mingled with his, as to make him be esteemed author of some of the lesser works which are ascribed to Homer. It may not be amiss to close these criticisms with that agreeable derision where-

x Plut. vitâ Hom. ex Ephoro.

y Pausanias, l. 10.

z Lucian's true history, l. 2.

a Suidas de Tigrete.

with Lucian treats the humour of grammarians in their search after minute and impossible inquiries, when he feigns, that he had talked over the point with Homer, in the 'Island of the Blessed.' 'I asked him,' says he, 'of what country he was? A question hard to be resolved with us; to which he answered, he could not certainly tell, because some had informed him that he was of Chios, some of Smyrna, and others of Colophon; but he took himself for a Babylonian, and said he was called Tigranes while he lived among his countrymen, and Homer while he was a hostage among the Grecians.'

His blindness.

At his birth he appears not to have been blind, whatever he might be afterwards. The Chian medal of him (which is of great antiquity, according to Leo Allatius) seats him with a volume open, and reading intently. But there is no need of proofs from antiquity for that which every line of his works will demonstrate. With what an exactness, agreeable to the natural appearance of things, do his cities stand, his mountains rise, his rivers wind, and his regions lie extended? How beautifully are the views of all things drawn in their figures, and adorned with their paintings? What address in action, what visible characters of the passions inspirit his heroes? It is not to be imagined, that a man could have been always blind, who thus inimitably copies nature, and gives every where the proper proportion, figure, colour, and life: 'Quem si quis

cæcum genitum putat' (says [b] Paterculus) 'omnibus sensibus orbus est:' He must certainly have beheld the creation, considered it with a long attention, and enriched his fancy by the most sensible knowledge of those ideas which he makes the reader see while he but describes them.

His education and master.

As he grew forward in years, he was trained up to learning (if we credit [c] Diodorus) under one 'Pronapides, a man of excellent natural endowments, who taught the Pelasgic letter invented by Linus.'

His travels.

When he was of riper years, for his farther accomplishment and the gratification of his thirst of knowledge, he spent a considerable part of his time in travelling. Upon which account [d] Proclus has taken notice that he must have been rich: 'For long travels,' says he, 'occasion high expences, and especially at those times when men could neither sail without imminent danger and inconveniencies, nor had a regulated manner of commerce with one another.' This way of reasoning appears very probable; and if it does not prove him to have been rich, it shews him, at least, to have had patrons of a generous spirit; who, observing the vastness of his capacity, believed themselves beneficent to mankind, while they supported one who seemed born for something extraordinary.

[b] Paterculus, l. 1. [c] Diod. Sicul. l. 3.

[d] Procl. vitâ Hom.

Egypt being at that time the seat of learning, the greatest wits and geniuses of Greece used to travel thither. Among these [e] Diodorus reckons Homer, and to strengthen his opinion alledges that multitude of their notions which he has received into his poetry, and of their customs to which he alludes in his fictions: such as his gods, which are named from the first Egyptian kings; the number of the muses taken from the nine minstrels which attended Osiris; the feasts wherein they used to send their statues of the deities into Ethiopia, and to return after twelve days; and the carrying their dead bodies over the lake to a pleasant place called Acherusia near Memphis, from whence arose the stories of Charon, Styx, and Elysium. These are notions which so abound in him, as to make [f] Herodotus say, he had introduced from thence the religion of Greece. And if others have believed he was an Egyptian, from his knowledge of their rites and traditions, which were revealed but to few, and of the arts and customs which were practised among them in general, it may prove at least thus much, that he must have travelled there.

As Greece was in all probability his native country, and had then began to make an effort in learning, we cannot doubt but he travelled there also, with

[e] Diod. Sic. l. 1.

[f] Ἡσιοδον γαρ και Ὁμηρον ἡλικιαν τεσσαρακοσιοισι ετεσι δοκεω μεν πρεσβυτερους γενεσθαι, και ἐ πλεοσι· ἑτοι δε εισι οἱ ποιησαντες θεογονιην Ἕλλησι, και τοισι θεοισι τας επωνυμιας, και τιμας τε και τεχνας διελοντες, και ειδεα αυτων σημηναντες. Herod. l. 2.

a particular observation. He uses the different dialects which are spoken in its different parts, as one who had been conversant with them all. But the argument which appears most irrefragable, is to be taken from his catalogue of ships: he has there given us an exact geography of Greece, where its cities, mountains, and plains, are particularly mentioned, where the courses of its rivers are traced out, where the countries are laid in order, their bounds assigned, and the uses of their soils specified. This the ancients, who compared it with the original, have allowed to be so true in all points, that it could never have been owing to a loose and casual information: even Strabo's account of Greece is but a kind of commentary upon Homer's.

We may carry this argument farther, to suppose his having been round Asia Minor, from his exact division of the 'Regnum Priami vetus' (as Horace calls it) into its separate dynasties, and the account he gives of the bordering nations in alliance with it. Perhaps too, in the wanderings of Ulysses about Sicily, whose ports and neighbouring islands are mentioned, he might contrive to send his hero where he had made his own voyage before. Nor will the fables he has intermingled be any objection to his having travelled in those parts, since they are not related as the history of the present time, but the tradition of the former. His mention of Thrace, his description of the beasts of Lybia, and of the climate in the Fortunate Islands, may seem also to give us a view of

him in the extremes of the earth, where it was not barbarous or uninhabited. It is hard to set limits to the travels of a man who has set none to that desire of knowledge which made him undertake them. Who can say what people he has not seen who appears to be versed in the customs of all? He takes the globe for the scene on which he introduces his subjects; he launches forward intrepidly, like one to whom no place is new, and appears a citizen of the world in general.

When he returned from his travels, he seems to have applied himself to the finishing of his poems, however he might have either designed, begun, or pursued them before. In these he treasured up his various acquisitions of knowledge; where they have been preserved through many ages, to be as well the proofs of his own industry, as the instructions of posterity. He could then describe his sacrifices after the Æolian manner; or [g] his leagues, with a mixture of Trojan and Spartan ceremonies: [h] he could then compare the confusion of a multitude to that tumult he had observed in the Icarian sea, dashing and breaking among its crowd of islands: he could represent the numbers of an army, by those flocks of swans [i] he had seen on the banks of the Cayster; or being to describe that heat of battle with which Achilles drove the Trojans into the river,[k] he could illustrate it with an al-

g Iliad. iii. h Il. ii. v. 145. i Il. ii. v. 461.
k Il. xxi. v. 12.

lusion from Cyrene or Cyprus, where, when the inhabitants burned their fields, the grasshoppers fled before the fire to perish in the ocean. His fancy being fully replenished, might supply him with every proper occasional image; and his soul, after having enlarged itself, and taken in an extensive variety of the creation, might be equal to the task of an Iliad and an Odyssey.

His old age and death.

In his old age he fell blind, and settled at Chios, as he says in the Hymn to Apollo (which, as is before observed, is acknowledged for his by Thucydides, and might occasion both Simonides and Theocritus to call him a Chian). Strabo [1] relates, that Lycurgus, the great legislator of Sparta, was reported to have a conference with Homer after he had studied the laws of Crete and Egypt, in order to form his constitutions. If this be true, how much a nobler representation does it give of him, and indeed more agreeable to what we conceive of this mighty genius, than those spurious accounts which keep him down among the meanest of mankind? What an idea could we frame to ourselves of a conversation held between two persons so considerable; a philosopher conscious of the force of poetry, and a poet knowing in the depths of philosophy; both their souls improved with learning, both eminently raised above little designs or the meaner kind of interest, and meeting together to consult the good of mankind?

But in this I have only indulged a thought which is not to be insisted upon; the evidence of history rather tends to prove that Lycurgus brought his works from Asia after his death: which [m] Proclus imagines to have happened at a great old age, on account of his vast extent of learning, for which a short life could never suffice.

His character and manners.

If we would now make a conjecture concerning the genius and temper of this great man, perhaps his works, which would not furnish us with facts for his life, will be more reasonably made use of to give us a picture of his mind: to this end, therefore, we may suffer the very name and notion of a book to vanish for a while, and look upon what is left us as a conversation, in order to gain an acquaintance with Homer. Perhaps the general air of his works will become the general character of his genius; and the particular observations give some light to the particular turns of his temper. His comprehensive knowledge shews that his soul was not formed like a narrow channel for a single stream, but as an expanse which might receive an ocean into its bosom; that he had the strongest desire of improvement, and an unbounded curiosity, which made its advantage of every transient circumstance, or obvious accident. His solid and sententious manner may make us admire him for a man of judgment: one who, in the darkest ages, could enter far into a disquisi-

[m] Procl. vitâ Hom.

tion of human nature; who, notwithstanding all the changes which governments, manners, rites, and even the notions of virtue, have undergone, and notwithstanding the improvements since made in arts, could still abound with so many maxims correspondent to truth, and notions applicable to so many sciences. The fire, which is so observable in his poem, may make us naturally conjecture him to have been of a warm temper and lively behaviour; and the pleasurable air which every where overspreads it, may give us reason to think that fire of imagination was tempered with sweetness and affability. If we farther observe the particulars he treats of, and imagine that he laid a stress upon the sentiments he delivers pursuant to his real opinions, we shall take him to be of a religious spirit, by his inculcating in almost every page the worship of the gods. We shall imagine him to be a generous lover of his country, from his care to extol it every where; which is carried to such a height, as to make " Plutarch observe, that though many of the barbarians are made prisoners or suppliants, yet neither of these disgraceful accidents (which are common to all nations in war) ever happens to one Greek throughout his works. We shall take him to be a compassionate lover of mankind, from his numberless praises of hospitality and charity (if indeed we are not to account for them, as the common writers of his life imagine, from his owing his support to these virtues).

It might seem from his love of stories, with his manner of telling them sometimes, that he gave his own picture when he painted his Nestor, and, as wise as he was, was no enemy to talking. One would think from his praises of wine, his copious goblets, and pleasing descriptions of banquets, that he was addicted to a cheerful, sociable life; which Horace takes notice of as a kind of tradition:

'Laudibus arguitur vini vinosus Homerus.' Ep. 19, 1.

And that he was not (as may be guessed of Virgil from his works) averse to the 'female sex,' will appear from his care to paint them amiably upon all occasions: his Andromache and Penelope are in each of his poems most shining characters of conjugal affection; even his Helena herself is drawn with all the softenings imaginable; his soldiers are exhorted to combat with the hopes of 'women;' his commanders are furnished with 'fair slaves' in their tents, nor is the venerable Nestor without a 'mistress.'

It is true, that in this way of turning a book into a man, this reasoning from his works to himself, we can at best but hit off a few outlines of a character: wherefore I shall carry it no farther, but conclude with one discovery which we may make from his silence; a discovery extremely proper to be made in this manner, which is, that he was of a very modest temper. There is in all other poets a custom of speaking of themselves, and a vanity of promising eternity to their writings: in both which Homer, who has the

best title to speak out, is altogether silent. As to the last of them, the world has made him ample recompence; it has given him that eternity he would not promise himself: but whatever endeavours have been offered in respect of the former, we find ourselves still under an irreparable loss. That which others have said of him has amounted to no more than conjecture; that which I have said is no farther to be insisted on: I have used the liberty which may be indulged me by precedent, to give my own opinions among the account of others; and the world may be pleased to receive them as so many willing endeavours to gratify its curiosity.

Catalogue of his works.

The only incontestible works which Homer has left behind him are the Iliad and Odyssey; the Batrachòmyomachia, or Battle of the Frogs and Mice, has been disputed, but is however allowed for his by many authors; amongst whom Statius[o] has reckoned it, like the Culex of Virgil, a trial of force before his greater performances. It is indeed a beautiful piece of raillery, in which a great writer might delight to unbend himself; an instance of that agreeable trifling which has been at some time or other indulged by the finest geniuses, and the offspring of that amusing and cheerful humour which generally accompanies the character of a rich imagination, like a vein of mercury running mingled with a mine of gold.

[o] Statius Præf. ad Sylv. 1.

The Hymns have been doubted also, and attributed by the scholiasts to Cynæthus the rhapsodist; but neither [p]Thucydides, [q]Lucian, nor [r]Pausanias, have scrupled to cite them as genuine. We have the authority of the two former for that to Apollo, though it be observed that the word Νομος is found in it, which the book de Poesi Homericâ (ascribed to Plutarch) tells us was not in use in Homer's time. We have also an authority of the last for a [s]Hymn to Ceres, of which he has given us a fragment. That to Mars is objected against for mentioning Τυραννος, and[t] that which is the first to Minerva, for using Τυχη; both of them being (according to the author of the treatise before mentioned) words of a later invention. The Hymn to Venus has many of its lines copied by Virgil, in the interview between Æneas and that goddess in the first Æneid. But whether these Hymns are Homer's, or not, they are always judged to be near as ancient, if not of the same age with him.

The Epigrams are extracted out of the life said to be written by Herodotus; and we leave them as such to stand or fall with it, except the Epitaph on Midas, which is very ancient, quoted without its author both by [t]Plato and [u]Longinus, and (according to [w]Laertius) ascribed by Simonides to Cleobulus the wise man; who, living after Homer, answers better to the age of Midas the son of Gordias.

[p] Thucyd. l. 3. [q] Lucian. Phalarid. 2.
[r] Pausan. Bœotic. [s] Paus. Messen. [t] Plat. in Phæd.
[u] Longin. § 36, edit. Tollii. [w] Laertius in vita Cleobuli.

The Margites, which is lost, is said by [x] Aristotle to have been a poem of a comic nature, wherein Homer made use of iambic verses as proper for raillery. It was a jest upon the fair sex, and had its name from one Margites, a weak man, who was the subject of it. The story is something loose, as may be seen by the account of it still preserved in Eustathius's [y] Comment on the Odyssey.

The Cercopes was a satirical work, which is also lost; we may however imagine it was levelled against the vices of men, if our conjecture be right that it was founded upon the old fable[z] of Cercopes, a nation who were turned into monkies for their frauds and impostures.

The Destruction of Oechalia was a poem of which (according to Eustathius) Hercules was the hero; and the subject, his ravaging that country, because Eurytus the king had denied him his daughter Iöle.

The Ilias Minor was a piece which included both the taking of Troy and the return of the Grecians: in this was the story of Sinon, which Virgil has made use of. [a]Aristotle has judged it not to belong to Homer.

The Cypriacs, if it was upon them that Nævius founded his Ilias Cypria (as [b] Mr. Dacier conjectures), were the love adventures of the ladies at the siege. These are rejected by [c] Herodotus, for saying that Paris brought Helen to Troy in three days; whereas

[x] Arist. Poet. cap. 4.
[y] Eustath. in Odyss. 10.
[z] Ovid. Metam. l. 14. de Cercop.
[a] Arist. Poet. cap. 24.
[b] Dac. on Arist. Poet. cap. 24.
[c] Herod. l. 2

Homer asserts they were long driven from place to place.

There are other things ascribed to him, such as the Heptapection goat, the Arachnomachia, &c. in the ludicrous manner; and the Thebais, Epigoni, of second siege of Thebes, the Phocais, Amazonia, &c. in the serious: which, if they were his, are to be reputed a real loss to the learned world. Time, in some things, may have prevailed over Homer himself, and left only the names of these works, as memorials that such were in being; but while the Iliad and Odyssey remain, he seems like a leader, who, though in his attempt of universal conquest he may have lost his advanced guards, or some few stragglers in the rear, yet with his main body ever victorious, passes in triumph through all ages.

Monuments, coins, marbles, remaining of him.

The remains we have at present, of those monuments antiquity had framed for him, are but few. It could not be thought that they who knew so little of the life of Homer could have a right knowledge of his person: yet they had statues of him as of their gods, whose forms they had never seen. 'Quinimò quæ non sunt, finguntur' (says [d] Pliny) 'pariuntque desideria non traditi vultûs, sicut in Homero evenit.' But though the ancient portraits of him seem purely notional, yet they agree (as I think [e] Fabretti has observed) in represent-

[d] Pliny, lib. 35. c. 32.

[e] Raph. Fabret. Explicatio Veteris Tabellæ Anaglyphæ, Hom. Iliad.

ing him with a short curled beard, and distinct marks of age in his forehead. That which is prefixed to this book, is taken from an ancient marble bust, in the palace of Farnese at Rome.

In Bolissus near Chios there is a ruin, which was shewn for the house of Homer, which [f] Leo Allatius went on pilgrimage to visit, and (as he tells us) found nothing but a few stones crumbling away with age, over which he and his companions wept for satisfaction.

They erected temples to Homer in Smyrna, as appears from [g] Cicero; one of these is supposed to be yet extant, and the same which they shew for the temple of Janus. It agrees with [h] Strabo's description; a square building of stone, near a river, thought to be the Meles, with two doors opposite to each other, north and south, and a large niche within the east wall, where the image stood: but M. Spon denies this to be the true Homerium.

Of the medals struck for him, there are some both of Chios and Smyrna still in being, and exhibited at the beginning of this essay. The most valuable, with respect to the largeness of the head, is that of Amastris, which is carefully copied from an original belonging to the present earl of Pembroke, and is the same which Gronovius, Cuperus, and Dacier have copies of, but very incorrectly performed.

[f] Leo Allat. de patriâ Hom. cap. 13.

[g] Cicero pro Archia.

[h] Strabo, lib. 14. Το Ὁμηρειον στοα τετραγωνος εχουσα νεων Ὁμηρου και ξοανα, &c. de Smyrna.

But that which of all the remains has been of late the chief amusement of the learned, is the marble called his Apotheosis, the work of Archelaus of Priene, and now in the palace of Colonna.[i] We see there a temple hung with its veil, where Homer is placed on a seat with a footstool to it, as he has described the seats of his gods; supported on each side with figures representing the Iliad and the Odyssey, the one by a sword, the other by the ornaments of a ship, which denotes the voyages of Ulysses. On each side of his footstool are mice, in allusion to the Batrachomyomachia. Behind is Time waiting upon him, and a figure with turrets on his head, which signifies the world, crowning him with the laurel. Before him is an altar, at which all the arts are sacrificing to him as to their deity. On one side of the altar stands a boy, representing mythology; on the other a woman, representing history: after her is poetry bringing the sacred fire: and in a long following train, tragedy, comedy, nature, virtue, memory, rhetoric, and wisdom, all in their proper attitudes.

[i] Since brought to England.

SECT. II.

HAVING now finished what was proposed concerning the history of Homer's life, I shall proceed to that of his works; and considering him no longer as a man, but as an author, prosecute the thread of his story in this his second life, through the different degrees of esteem which those writings have obtained in different periods of time.

It has been the fortune of several great geniuses not to be known while they lived, either for want of historians, the meanness of fortune, or the love of retirement, to which a poetical temper is peculiarly addicted. Yet after death their works give themselves a life in fame, without the help of an historian; and, notwithstanding the meanness of their author, or his love of retreat, they go forth among mankind, the glories of that age which produced them, and the delight of those which follow it. This is a fate particularly verified in Homer, than whom no considerable author is less known as to himself, or more highly valued as to his productions.

The first publication of his works by Lycurgus.

The earliest account of these is said by [a] Plutarch to be some time after his death, when Lycurgus sailed to Asia: 'There he had the first sight of Homer's works, which

[a] Plut. vit. Lycurgi.

were probably preserved by the grandchildren of Creophilus; and having observed that their pleasurable air of fiction did not hinder the poet's abounding in maxims of state, and rules of morality, he transcribed and carried with him that entire collection we have now among us: for at that time (continues this author) there was only an obscure rumour in Greece to the reputation of these poems, and but a few scattered fragments handed about, till Lycurgus published them entire.' Thus they were in danger of being lost as soon as they were produced, by the misfortune of the age, a want of taste for learning, or the manner in which they were left to posterity, when they fell into the hands of Lycurgus. He was a man of great learning, a lawgiver to a people divided and untractable, and one who had a notion that poetry influenced and civilized the minds of men; which made him smooth the way to his constitution by the songs of Thales the Cretan, whom he engaged to write upon obedience and concord. As he proposed to himself, that the constitution he would raise upon this their union should be of a martial nature, these poems were of an extraordinary value to him; for they came with a full force into his scheme; the moral they inspired was unity; the air they breathed was martial; and their story had this particular engagement for the Lacedæmonians, that it shewed Greece in war, and Asia subdued, under the conduct of one of their own monarchs, who commanded all the Grecian princes. Thus the poet both pleased the lawgiver and the people; from

whence he had a double influence when the laws were settled: for his poem then became a panegyric on their constitution, as well as a register of their glory; and confirmed them in the love of it by a gallant description of those qualities and actions for which it was adapted. This made [b] Cleomenes call him 'The Poet of the Lacedæmonians:' and therefore when we remember that Homer owed the publication of his works to Lycurgus, we should grant too, that Lycurgus owed in some degree the enforcement of his laws to the works of Homer.

Their reception in Greece.

At their first appearance in Greece, they were not reduced into a regular body, but remained as they were brought over in several separate pieces, called (according to [c] Ælian) from the subject on which they treated; as the Battle at the Ships, the Death of Dolon, the valour of Agamemnon, the Patroclea, the Grot of Calypso, the Slaughter of the Wooers, and the like. Nor were these entitled books, but rhapsodies; from whence they who sung them had the title of rhapsodists. It was in this manner they began to be dispersed, while their poetry, their history, the glory they ascribed to Greece in general, the particular description they gave of it, and the compliment they paid to every little state by an honourable mention, so influenced all, that they were transcribed and sung with general approbation. But what seems to have most recommended them

[b] Plutarch, Apophtheg. [c] Ælian. l. 13. cap. 14.

was, that Greece, which could not be great in its divided condition, looked upon the fable of them as a likely plan of future grandeur. They seem from thenceforward to have had an eye upon the conquest of Asia, as a proper undertaking, which by its importance might occasion union enough to give a diversion from civil wars, and by its prosecution bring in an acquisition of honour and empire. This is the meaning of [d] Isocrates, when he tells us, 'That Homer's poetry was in the greater esteem, because it gave exceeding praise to those who fought against the barbarians. Our ancestors (continues he) honoured it with a place in education and musical contests, that by often hearing it we should have a notion of an original enmity between us and those nations; and that, admiring the virtue of those who fought at Troy, we should be induced to emulate their glory. And indeed they never quitted this thought till they had successfully carried their arms wherever Homer might thus excite them.

Digested into order at Athens.

But while his works were suffered to lie in a distracted manner, the chain of story was not always perceived, so that they lost

[d] Οιμαι δε και την Ὁμηρε ποιησιν μειζω λαβειν δοξαν, ὅτι καλως τες πολεμησανλας τοις βαρβαροις ενεγκωμιασε· και δια τυτο βελητηναι τες Προγονες ἡμων ενλιμον αυτε ποιησαι την τεχνην, εν τε τοις της μυσικης αθλοις, και τη παιδευσει των νεωτερων ἱνα πολλακις ακεονλες των επων, εκμανθανωμεν την εχθραν την προς αυτες ὑπαρχεσαν, και ζηλεονλες τας αρετας των στρατευσαμενων επι Τροιαν των αυτων εργων εκεινοις επιθυμωμεν. Isocrat. Paneg.

much of their force and beauty by being read disorderly. Wherefore, as Lacedæmon had the first honour of their publication by Lycurgus, that of their regulation fell to the share of Athens in the time of [e] Solon, who himself made a law for their recital. It was then that Pisistratus, the tyrant of Athens, who was a man of great learning and eloquence (as [f] Cicero has it), first put together the confused parts of Homer, according to that regularity in which they are now handed down to us. He divided them into the two different works, entitled the Iliad and Odyssey; he digested each according to the author's design, to make their plans become evident; and distinguished each again into twenty-four books, to which were afterwards prefixed the twenty-four letters. There is a passage indeed in [g] Plato, which takes this work from Pisistratus, by giving it to his son Hipparchus; with this addition, that he commanded them to be sung at the feast called Panathenæa. Perhaps it may be, as [h] Leo Allatius has imagined, because the son published the copy more correctly: this he offers, to reconcile so great a testimony as Plato's to the cloud of witnesses

[e] Diog. Laert. vit Sol.

[f] Quis doctior iisdem illis temporibus, aut cujus eloquentia literis instructior quàm Pisistrati? Qui primus Homeri libros, confusos antea, sic disposuisse dicitur ut nunc habemus. Cic. de Orat. l. 3. Vide etiam Æl. l. 13. cap. 14. Liban. Panegyr. in Jul. Anonymam Homeri vitam. Fusiùs verò in Commentatoribus Dyon. Thracis.

[g] Plato in Hipparcho. [h] Leo Allatius de patriâ Hom. cap. 5.

which are against him in it: but be that as it will, Athens still claims its proper honour of rescuing the father of learning from the injuries of time, of having restored Homer to himself, and given the world a view of him in his perfection. So that if his verses were before admired for their use and beauty, as the stars were before they were considered scientifically as a system, they were now admired much more for their graceful harmony, and that sphere of order in which they appear to move. They became thenceforward more the pleasure of the wits of Greece, more the subject of their studies, and the employment of their pens.

About the time that this new edition of Homer was published in Athens, there was one Cynæthus, a learned rhapsodist, who (as the [i] scholiast of Pindar informs us) settled first at Syracuse in that employment; and if (as Leo Allatius believes) he had been before an assistant in the edition, he may be supposed to have first carried it abroad. But it was not long preserved correct among his followers; they committed mistakes in their transcriptions and repetitions, and had even the presumption to alter some lines, and interpolate others. Thus the works of Homer ran the danger of being utterly defaced; which made it become the concern of kings and philosophers that they should be restored to their primitive beauty.

[i] Schol. Pind. in Nem. Od. 2.

The edition in Macedon under Alexander.

In the front of these is Alexander the Great, for whom they will appear peculiarly calculated, if we consider that no books more enliven or flatter personal valour, which was great in him to what we call romantic: neither has any book more places applicable to his designs on Asia, or (at it happened) to his actions there. It was then no ill compliment in Aristotle[k] to purge the Iliad, upon his account, from those errors and additions which had crept into it. And so far was Alexander himself from esteeming it a matter of small importance, that he afterwards[l] assisted in a strict review of it with Anaxarchus and Callisthenes; whether it was merely because he esteemed it a treasury of military virtue and knowledge, or that (according to a late ingenious conjecture) he had a farther aim in promoting the propagation of it, when he was ambitious to be esteemed a son of Jupiter; as a book which treating of the sons of the gods, might make the intercourse between them and mortals become a familiar notion. The review being finished, he laid it up in a casket which was found among the spoils of Darius, as what best deserved so inestimable a case; and from this circumstance it was named 'The Edition of the Casket.'

[k] Plut. in vita Alexandri.

[l] Φερεῖαι γὰρ τις διορθωσις της Ὁμηρου ποιησεως ἡ εκ τῦ Ναρθηκος λεγομενη τῦ Αλεξανδρῳ μετα τῦ περι Καλλισθενην και Αναξαρχον επελθοντος, και σημειωσαμενῳ επειτα κατατεθεντος εις Ναρθηκα ὃν εὑρεν εν Περσικη γαζῃ πολυτελως κατεσκευασμενον. Strabo, lib. 13.

Editions in Egypt.

The place where the works of Homer were next found in the greatest regard is Egypt, under the reign of the Ptolemies. These Kings being descended from Greece, retained always a passion for their original country. The men, the books, the qualifications of it, were in esteem in their court; they preserved the language in their family; they encouraged a concourse of learned men; erected the greatest library in the world; and trained up their princes under Grecian tutors, among whom the most considerable were appointed for revisers of Homer. The first of these was [m] Zenodotus, library-keeper to the first Ptolemy, and qualified for this undertaking by being both a poet and a grammarian: but neither his copy, nor that which his disciple Aristophanes had made, satisfying Aristarchus (whom Ptolemy Philometor had appointed over his son Euergetes), he set himself to another correction with all the wit and learning he was master of. He restored some verses to their former readings, rejected others which he marked with obelisks as spurious, and proceeded with such industrious accuracy, that, notwithstanding there were some who wrote against his performance, antiquity has generally acquiesced in it. Nay, so far have they carried their opinion in his favour, as to call a man an [n] Aristarchus, when they meant to say a candid judicious critic; in the same manner as they call

[m] Suidas.

[n] 'Arguet ambiguè dictum; mutando notabit;
Fiet Aristarchus———' Horat. Ars Poetica.

the contrary a Zoilus, from that Zoilus who about this time wrote an envious criticism against Homer. And now we mention these two together, I fancy it will be no small pleasure to the benevolent part of mankind, to see how their fortunes and characters stand in contrast to each other, for examples to future ages, at the head of the two contrary sorts of criticism, which proceed from good-nature or from ill-will. The one was honoured with the offices and countenance of the court; the other, [o] when he applied to the same place for an encouragement amongst the men of learning, had his petition rejected with contempt. The one had his fame continued to posterity; the other is only remembered with infamy. If the one had antagonists, they were obliged to pay him the deference of a formal answer; the other was never answered but in general, with those opprobrious names of Thracian slave and rhetorical dog. The one is supposed to have his copy still remaining; while the other's remarks are perished, as things that men were ashamed to preserve, the just desert of whatever arises from the miserable principle of ill-will or envy.

In Syria and other parts of Asia.

It was not the ambition of Egypt only to have a correct edition of Homer. We find in the life of [p] the poet Aratus, that, he having finished a copy of the Odyssey, was sent for by Antiochus king of Syria, and enter-

o Vitruv. l. 7. in Procem.

p Author vitæ Arati, et Suidas in Arato.

tained by him while he finished one of the Iliads. We read too of others which were published with the names of countries; such as the [q] Massaliotic and Sinopic; as if the world were agreed to make his works in their survival undergo the same fate with himself; and that as different cities contended for his birth, so they might again contend for his true edition. But though these reviews were not confined to Egypt, the greatest honour was theirs, in that universal approbation which the performance of Aristarchus received; and if it be not his edition which we have at present, we know not to whom to ascribe it.

In India and Persia.

But the world was not contented barely to have settled an edition of his works. There were innumerable comments, in which they were opened like a treasury of learning; and translations, whereby other languages became enriched by an effusion of his spirit of poetry. [r] Ælian tells us, that even the Indians had them in their tongue, and the Persian kings sung them in theirs. [s] Persius mentions a version in Latin by Labeo; and in general the passages and imitations which are taken from him, are so numerous, that they may be said to have been translated by piece-meal into that, and all other languages: which affords us this remark, that there is hardly any thing in him which has not been pitched upon by some author or other as a particular beauty.

[q] Eustathius initio Iliados.

[r] Ælian. l. 12. cap. 48.

[s] Persius, Sat. I.

The extent and height of their reputation in the heathen world.

It is almost incredible to what an height the idea of that veneration the ancients paid to Homer will arise, to one who reads particularly with this view through all these periods. He was no sooner come from his obscurity, but Greece received him with delight and profit: there were then but few books to divide their attention, and none which had a better title to engross it all. They made some daily discoveries of his beauties, which were still promoted in their different channels by the favourite qualities of different nations. Sparta and Macedon considered him most in respect of his warlike spirit; Athens and Egypt with regard to his poetry and learning; and all their endeavours united under the hands of the learned to make him blaze forth into an universal character. His works, which from the beginning passed for excellent poetry, grew to be history and geography; they rose to be a magazine of sciences; were exalted into a scheme of religion; gave a sanction to whatever rites they mentioned; were quoted in all cases for the conduct of private life, and the decision of all questions of the law of nations; nay, learned by art as the very book of belief and practice. From him the poets drew their inspirations, the critics their rules, and the philosophers a defence of their opinions. Every author was fond to use his name, and every profession writ books upon him, till they swelled to libraries. The warriors formed themselves by his heroes, and the oracles delivered his verses for answers. Nor was man-

kind satisfied to have seated his character at the top of human wisdom, but being overborne with an imagination that he transcended their species, they admitted him to share in those honours they gave the deities. They instituted games for him, dedicated statues, erected temples, as at Smyrna, Chios, and Alexandria; and Ælian [t] tells us, that when the Argives sacrificed with their guests, they used to invoke the presence of Apollo and Homer together.

The decline of their character in the beginning of Christianity.

Thus he was settled on a foot of adoration, and continued highly venerated in the Roman empire, when Christianity began. Heathenism was then to be destroyed, and Homer appeared the father of it; whose fictions were at once the belief of the Pagan religion, and the objections of Christianity against it. He became therefore very deeply involved in the question; and not with that honour which hitherto attended him, but as a criminal who had drawn the world into folly. He was on one hand accused for having framed fables [u] upon the works of Moses; as the rebellion of the giants from the building of Babel, and the casting Ate or Strife out of heaven from the fall of Lucifer. He was exposed on the other hand for those which he is said to invent, as when [w] Arnobius cries out, 'This is the man who wounded your Venus, imprisoned your Mars, who freed even your Jupiter by

[t] Ælian, l. 9. cap. xv.

[u] Justin Martyr, Admonit. ad gentes.

[w] Arnobius adversus gentes, l. 7.

Briareus, and who finds authorities for all your vices,' &c. Mankind was [x] derided for whatever he had hitherto made them believe; and [y] Plato, who expelled him his commonwealth, has, of all the philosophers, found the best quarter from the fathers, for passing that sentence. His finest beauties began to take a new appearance of pernicious qualities; and because they might be considered as allurements to fancy, or supports to those errors with which they were mingled, they were to be depreciated while the contest of faith was in being. It was hence that the reading them was discouraged, that we hear Ruffinus accusing St. Jerome for it, and that [z] St. Austin rejects him as the grand master of fable; though indeed the 'dulcissimè vanus,' which he applies to Homer, looks but like a fondling manner of parting with them.

This strong attack against our author, as the great bulwark of paganism, obliged the philosophers, who could have acquiesced as his admirers, to appear as his defenders; who, because they saw the fables could not be literally supported, endeavoured to find a hidden sense, and to carry on every where that vein of allegory, which was already broken open with success in some places. But how miserably were they forced to shifts, when they made Juno's [a] dressing in the cestos for Jupiter to signify the purging of the

[x] Vid. Tertull. Apol. cap. 14.

[y] Arnobius, ibid. Eusebius præp. Evangl. l. 14. cap. 10.

[z] St. August. Confess. l. 1. cap. 14.

[a] Plutarch on reading the Poets.

air as it approached the fire? Or the story of Mars and Venus, that inclination they have to incontinency who are born when these planets are in conjunction? Wit and learning had here a large field to display themselves, and to disagree in; for sometimes Jupiter, and sometimes Vulcan, was made to signify the fire; or Mars and Venus were allowed to give us a lecture of morality at one time, and a problem of astronomy at another. And these strange discoveries, which Porphyry [b] and the rest would have to pass for the genuine theology of the Greeks, prove but (as Eusebius [c] terms it) the perverting of fables into a mystic sense. They did indeed often defend Homer, but then they allegorised away their gods by doing so. What the world took for substantial objects of adoration, dissolved into a figurative meaning, a moral truth, or a piece of learning, which might equally correspond to any religion; and the learned at last had left themselves nothing to worship, when they came to find an object in Christianity.

Restoration of Homer's works to their just character.

The dispute of faith being over, ancient learning reassumed its dignity, and Homer obtained his proper place in the esteem of mankind. His books are now no longer the scheme of a living religion, but become the register of one of former times. They are not now received for a rule of life, but valued for those just observations which are dispersed through them.

[b] Porphyrius de Antro Nymph. &c.

[c] Eusebii Præpar. Evangel. l. 3? cap. i.

They are no longer pronounced from oracles, but quoted still by authors for their learning. Those remarks which the philosophers made upon them, have their weight with us; those beauties which the poets dwelt upon, their admiration: and even after the abatement of what was extravagant in his run of praise, he remains confessedly a mighty genius, not transcended by any which have since arisen; a prince, as well as a father of poetry.

SECT. III.

A view of the learning of Homer's time.

It remains, in this historical essay, to regulate our present opinion of Homer by a view of his learning, compared with that of his age. For this end he may first be considered as a poet, that character which was his professedly; and secondly as one endowed with other sciences, which must be spoken of, not as in themselves, but as in subserviency to his main design. Thus he will be seen on his right foot of perfection in one view, and with the just allowances which should be made on the other. While we pass through the several heads of science, the state of those times in which he writ will show us both the impediments he rose under, and the reasons why several things in him which have been objected to either could not, or should not, be otherwise than they are.

In poetry.

As for the state of poetry, it was at a low pitch till the age of Homer. There is mention of Orpheus, Linus, and Musæus; venerable names in antiquity, and eminently celebrated in fable for the wonderful power of their songs and music. The learned Fabricius, in his Bibliotheca Græca, has reckoned about seventy who are said to have written before Homer; but their works were not preserved, and that is a sort of proof they were not

excellent. What sort of poets Homer saw in his own time, may be gathered from his description of Demodocus [a] and Phemius, whom he has introduced to celebrate his profession. The imperfect risings of the art lay then among the extempore singers of stories at banquets, who were half singers, half musicians. Nor was the name of poet then in being, or once used throughout Homer's works. From this poor state of poetry, he has taken a handle to usher it into the world with the boldest stroke of praise which has ever been given it. It is in the eighth Odyssey, where Ulysses puts Demodocus upon a trial of skill. Demodocus having diverted the guests with some actions of the Trojan war; 'b All these (says Ulysses) you have sung very elegantly, as if you had either been present, or heard it reported; but pass now to a subject I shall give you, sing the management of Ulysses in the wooden horse, just as it happened, and I will acknowledge the gods have taught you your songs.' This the singer, being inspired from heaven, begins immediately; and Ulysses, by weeping at the recital, confesses the truth of it. We see here a narration which could only pass upon an age extremely ignorant in the nature of poetry, where that claim of inspiration is given to it which it has never since laid down, and (which is more) a power of prophesying at pleasure ascribed to it. Thus much therefore we gather from himself, concerning the most ancient state

[a] Od. 1st, and Od. 8th. [b] Odyss. l. viii. v. 487, &c.

of poetry in Greece, that no one was honoured with the name of poet before him whom it has especially belonged to ever after. And if we farther appeal to the consent of authors, we find he has other titles for being called the first. [c] Josephus observes, that the Greeks have not contested but he was the most ancient whose books they had. Aristotle[d] says, he was the 'first who brought all the parts of a poem into one piece,' to which he adds, 'and with true judgment,' to give him a praise including both the invention and perfection. Whatever was serious or magnificent made a part of his subject: war and peace were the comprehensive division in which he considered the world; and the plans of his poems were founded on the most active scenes of each, the adventures of a siege, and the accidents of a voyage. For these, his spirit was equally active and various, lofty in expression, clear in narration, natural in description, rapid in action, abundant in figures. If ever he appears less than himself, it is from the time he writ in; and if he runs into errors, it is from an excess, rather than a defect, of genius. Thus he rose over the poetical world, shining out like a sun all at once; which, if it sometimes make too faint an appearance, it is to be ascribed only to the unkindness of the season that clouds and obscures it; and if he is sometimes too violent, we confess at the same time that we owe all things to his heat.

[c] Joseph. contra Appion. l. 1. [d] Arist. Poet. cap. 25.

Theology.

As for his theology, we see the heathen system entirely followed. This was all he could then have to work upon, and where he fails of truth for want of revelation, he at least shews his knowledge in his own religion by the traditions he delivers. But we are now upon a point to be farther handled because the greatest controversy concerning the merit of Homer depends upon it. Let us consider then, that there was an age in Greece when natural reason only discovered in general that there must be something superior to us, and corrupt tradition had affixed the notion to a number of deities. At this time Homer rose, with the finest turn imaginable for poetry; who, designing to instruct mankind in the manner for which he was most adapted, made use of the ministry of the gods to give the highest air of veneration to his writings. He found the religion of mankind consisting of fables, and their morality and political instruction delivered in allegories. Nor was it his business when he undertook the province of a poet (not of a mere philosopher) to be the first who should discard that which furnishes poetry with its most beautiful appearance: and especially, since the age he lived in, by discovering its taste, had not only given him authority, but even put him under the necessity of preserving it. Whatever therefore he might think of his gods, he took them as he found them: he brought them into action according to the notions which were then entertained, and in such stories as were then believed; unless we imagine so

great an absurdity, as that he invented every thing he delivers. Yet there are several rays of truth streaming through all this darkness, in those sentiments he entertains concerning the providence of the gods, delivered in several allegories lightly veiled over, from whence the learned afterwards pretended to draw new knowledges, each according to his power of penetration and fancy. But that we may the better comprehend him in all the parts of this general view, let us extract from him a scheme of his religion.

He has a Jupiter, a 'father of gods and men,' to whom he applies several attributes, as wisdom, justice, knowledge, power, &c. which are essentially inherent to the idea of a god. [e] He has given him two vessels, out of which he distributes natural good or evil for the life of man: he places the gods in council round him; he makes prayers [f] pass to and fro before him; and mankind adore him with sacrifice. But all this grand appearance, wherein poetry paid a deference to reason, is dashed and mingled with the imperfection of our nature; not only with the applying our passions to the Supreme Being (for men have always been treated with this compliance to their notions) but that he is not even exempted from our common appetites and frailties; for he is made to eat, drink, and sleep: but this his admirers would imagine to be only a grosser way of representing a general notion

of happiness, because he says in one place, [g] that the food of the gods was not of the same nature with ours. But upon the whole, while he endeavoured to speak of a deity without a right information, he was forced to take him from that image he discovered in man; and (like one who being dazzled with the sun in the heavens would view him as he is reflected in a river) he has taken off the impression not only ruffled with the emotion of our passions, but obscured with the earthly mixtures of our natures.

The other gods have all their provinces assigned them; 'Every thing has its peculiar deity,' says Maximus Tyrius,[h] 'by which Homer would insinuate that the godhead was present to all things.' When they are considered farther, we find he has turned the virtues and endowments of our minds into persons, to make the springs of action become visible; and because they are given by the gods, he represents them as gods themselves descending from heaven. In the same strong light he shews our vices, when they occasion misfortunes, like extraordinary powers which inflict them upon us; and even our natural punishments are represented as punishers themselves. But when we come to see the manner they are introduced in, they are found feasting, fighting, wounded by men, and shedding a sort of blood, in which his machines play a little too grossly: the fable which was admitted

[g] Iliad. v. ver. 340.

[h] Maxim. Tyrius, Diss. 16.

to procure the pleasure of surprise, violently oppresses the moral, and it may be lost labour to search for it in every minute circumstance, if indeed it was intended to be there. The general strokes are however philosophical; the dress the poet's, which was used for convenience, and allowed to be ornamental. And something still may be offered in his defence, if he has both preserved the grand moral from being obscured, and adorned the parts of his works with such sentiments of the gods as belonged to the age he lived in; which that he did, appears from his having then had that success for which allegory was contrived. 'It is the madness of men,' says Maximus Tyrius,[i] 'to disesteem what is plain, and admire what is hidden; this the poets discovering, invented the fable for a remedy, when they treated of holy matters; which being more obscure than conversation, and more clear than the riddle, is a mean between knowledge and ignorance; believed partly for being agreeable, and partly for being wonderful. Thus as poets in name, and philosophers in effect, they drew mankind gradually to a search after truth, when the name of philosopher would have been harsh and displeasing.'

When Homer proceeds to tell us our duty to these superior beings, we find prayer, sacrifice, lustration, and all the rites which were esteemed religious, constantly recommended under fear of their displeasure. We find too a notion of the soul's subsisting after this

[i] Maxim. Tyrius, Diss. 29.

life; but for want of revelation he knows not what to reckon the happiness of a future state, to any one who was not deified: which is plain from the speech of Achilles [k] to Ulysses in the region of the dead; where he tells him, that 'he would rather serve the poorest creature upon earth than rule over all the departed.' It was chiefly for this reason that Plato excluded him his commonwealth; he thought Homer spoke indecently of the gods, and dreadfully of a future state: but if he cannot be defended in every thing as a theologist, yet we may say in respect of his poetry, that he has enriched it from theology with true sentiments for profit; adorned it with allegories for pleasure; and by using some machines which have no farther significancy, or are so refined as to make it doubted if they have any, he has however produced that character in poetry which we call the marvellous, and from which the agreeable (according to Aristotle) is always inseparable.

Politics.

If we take the state of Greece at his time in a political view, we find it a [l] disunited country, made up of small states; and whatever was managed in war amounted to no more than intestine skirmishes, or piracies abroad, which were easily revenged on account of their disunion. Thus one people stole Europa, and another Io; the Grecians took Hesione from Troy, and the Trojans took Helena from Greece in revenge. But this last

[k] Odyss. xi. v. 488.

[l] See Thucydides, lib. i.

having greater friends and alliances than any upon whom the rapes had hitherto fallen, the ruin of Troy was the consequence; and the force of the Asiatic coasts was so broken, that this accident put a stop to the age of piracies. Then the intestine broils of Greece, which had been discontinued during the league, were renewed upon its dissolution. War and sedition moved people from place to place, during its want of inhabitants; exiles from one country were received for kings in another; and leaders took tracts of ground to bestow them upon their followers. Commerce was neglected, living at home unsafe, and nothing of moment transacted by any but against their neighbours. Athens only, where the people were undisturbed because it was a barren soil which nobody coveted, had begun to send colonies abroad, being overstocked with inhabitants.

Now a poem coming out at such a time, with a moral capable of healing these disorders by promoting union, we may reasonably think it was designed for that end to which it is so peculiarly adapted. If we imagine therefore that Homer was a politician in this affair, we may suppose him to have looked back into the ages past, to see if at any time these disorders had been less; and to have pitched upon that story wherein they found a temporary cure, that by celebrating it with all possible honour he might instil a desire of the same sort of union into the hearts of his countrymen. This indeed was a work which could belong to none but a poet, when governors had power only over

small territories, and the numerous governments were every way independent. It was then that all the charms of poetry were called forth, to insinuate the important glory of an alliance; and the Iliad delivered as an oracle from the muses, with all the pomp of words and artificial influence. Union among themselves was recommended, peace at home, and glory abroad; and, lest general precepts should be rendered useless by misapplications, he gives minute and particular lessons concerning it: how when his kings quarrel, their subjects suffer; when they act in conjunction, victory attends them. Therefore when they meet in council, plans are drawn, and provisions made for future action; and when in the field, the arts of war are described with the greatest exactness. These were lectures of general concern to mankind, proper for the poet to deliver, and kings to attend to; such as made Porphyry write of the profit that princes might receive from Homer; and Stratocles, Hermias, and Frontinus, extract military discipline out of him. Thus, though Plato has banished him from one imaginary commonwealth, he has still been serviceable to many real kingdoms.

Morality. The morality of Greece could not be perfect while there was a natural weakness in its government; faults in politics are occasioned by faults in ethics, and occasion them in their turn. The division into so many states was the rise of frequent quarrels, whereby men were bred up in a rough untractable disposition. Bodily strength met

with the greatest honours, because it was daily necessary to the subsistence of little governments; and that headlong courage, which throws itself forward to enterprise and plunder, was universally caressed, because it carried all things before it. It is no wonder in an age of such education and customs, that, as [m] Thucydides says, 'Robbing was honoured, provided it were done with gallantry, and that the ancient poets made people question one another as they sailed by, if they were thieves; as a thing for which no one ought either to be scorned or upbraided.' These were the sort of actions which the singers then recorded, and it was out of such an age that Homer was to take his subjects. For this reason (not a want of morality in him) we see a boasting temper and unmanaged roughness in the spirit of his heroes, which ran out in pride, anger, or cruelty. It is not in him as in our modern romances, where men are drawn in perfection, and we but read with a tender weakness what we can neither apply nor emulate. Homer writ for men, and therefore he writ of them; if the world had been better, he would have shewn it so; as the matter now stands, we see his people with the turn of his age, insatiably thirsting after glory and plunder; for which however he has found them a lawful cause, and taken care to retard their success by the intemperance of those very appetites.

In the prosecution of the story, every part of it

[m] Thucyd. lib. 1.

has its lessons of morality: there is brotherly love in Agamemnon and Menelaüs, friendship in Achilles and Patroclus, and the love of his country in Hector. But since we have spoken of the Iliad as more particular for its politics, we may consider the Odyssey as its moral is more directly framed for ethics. It carries the hero through a world of trials both of the dangerous and pleasurable nature. It shews him first under most surprising weights of adversity, among shipwrecks and savages; all these he is made to pass through, in the methods by which it becomes a man to conquer; a patience in suffering, and a presence of mind in every accident. It shews him again in another view, tempted with the baits of idle or unlawful pleasures; and then points out the methods of being safe from them. But if in general we consider the care our author has taken to fix his lessons of morality by the proverbs and precepts he delivers, we shall not wonder if Greece, which afterwards gave the appellation of wise to men who settled single sentences of truth, should give him the title of the Father of Virtue, for introducing such a number. To be brief, if we take the opinion of [n] Horace, he has proposed him to us as a master of morality; he lays down the common philosophical division of good into pleasant, profitable, and honest; and then asserts that Homer

[n] 'Qui quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.'

Hor. Ep. 2. lib. 1.

has more fully and clearly instructed us in each of them than the most rigid philosophers.

Some indeed have thought, notwithstanding all this, that Homer had only a design to please in his inventions; and that others have since extracted morals out of his stories (as indeed all stories are capable of being used so). But this is an opinion concerning poetry, which the world has rather degenerated into than begun with. The traditions of Orpheus's civilizing mankind by moral poems, with others of the like nature, may shew there was a better use of the art both known and practised. There is also a remarkable passage of this kind in the third book of the Odyssey, that Agamemnon left one of the [o] poets of those times in his court when he sailed for Troy; and that his queen was preserved virtuous by his songs, till Ægysthus was forced to expel him in order to debauch her. Here he has hinted what a true poetical spirit can do, when applied to the promotion of virtue; and from this one may judge he could not but design that himself, which he recommends as the duty and merit of his profession. Others since his time may have seduced the art to worse intentions; but they who are offended at the liberties of some poets, should not condemn all in the gross for trifling or corruption; especially when the evidence runs so strongly for any one to the contrary.

We may in general go on to observe, that at the

[o] Odyssey, iii. v. 267.

time when Homer was born Greece did not abound in learning. For wherever politics and morality are weak, learning wants its peaceable air to thrive in. He has however introduced as much of their learning, and even of what he learned from Egypt, as the nature and compass of his work would admit. But that we may not mistake the elogies of those ancients who call him the 'Father of Arts and Sciences,' and be surprised to find so little of them (as they are now in perfection) in his works, we should know that this character is not to be understood at large, as if he had included the full and regular systems of every thing: he is to be considered professedly only in quality of a poet; this was his business, to which as whatever he knew was to be subservient, so he has not failed to introduce those strokes of knowledge from the whole circle of arts and sciences which the subject demanded, either for necessity or ornament. And secondly, it should be observed that many of those notions, which his great genius drew only from nature and the truth of things, have been imagined to proceed from his acquaintance with arts and sciences invented long after; to which that they were applicable, was no wonder, since both his notions and those sciences were equally founded in truth and nature.

History. Before his time there were no historians in Greece: he treated historically of past transactions, according as he could be informed by tradition, song, or whatever method there

was of preserving their memory. For this we have the consent of antiquity; they have generally more appealed to his authority, and more insisted on it, than on the testimony of any other writer, when they treat of the rites, customs, and manners of the first times. They have generally believed that the acts of Tydeus at Thebes, the second siege of that city, the settlement of Rhodes, the battle between the Curetes and the Ætolians, the succession of the kings of Mycenæ by the sceptre of Agamemnon, the acts of the Greeks at Troy, and many other such accounts, are some of them wholly preserved by him, and the rest as faithfully related as by any historian. Nor perhaps was all of his invention which seems to be feigned, but rather frequently the obscure traces and remains of real persons and actions; which, as [P] Strabo observes, when history was transmitted by oral tradition, might be mixed with fable before it came into the hands of the poet. 'This happened (says he) to Herodotus, the first professed historian, who is as fabulous as Homer when he defers to the common reports of countries; and it is not to be imputed to either as a fault but as a necessity of the times.' Nay, the very passages which cause us to tax them at this distance with being fabulous, might be occasioned by their diligence, and a fear of erring, if they too hastily rejected those reports which had passed current in the nations they described.

[P] Strabo, l. 1.

Geography.

Before his time there was no such thing as geography in Greece. For this we have the suffrage of Strabo,[q] the best of geographers, who approves the opinion of Hipparchus and other ancients, that Homer was the very author of it; and upon this account begins his treatise of the science itself with an encomium on him. As to the general part of it, we find he had a knowledge of the earth's being surrounded with the ocean, because he makes the sun and stars both to rise and set in it; and that he knew the use of the stars, is plain from his making Ulysses[r] sail by the observation of them. But the instance oftenest alledged upon this point is the shield[s] of Achilles; where he places the earth encompassed with the sea, and gives the stars the names they are yet known by, as the Hyades, Pleïades, the Bear, and Orion. By the three first of these he represents the constellations of the northern region: and in the last he gives a single representative of the southern, to which (as it were for a counter-balance) he adds a title of greatness, *σθενος Ωριωνος*. Then he tells us that the Bear, or stars of the arctic circle, never disappear; as an observation which agrees with no other. And if to this we add (what Eratosthenes thought he meant) that the five plates, which were fastened on the shield, divided it by the lines where they met into the five zones, it will appear an original design of globes and stars. In the particular parts of geo-

[q] Strabo, ibid. initio.

[r] Odyss. l. v. ver. 72.

[s] Iliad. xviii. v. 482, &c.

graphy his knowledge is entirely incontestable. Strabo refers to him upon all occasions, allowing that he knew the extremes of the earth, some of which he names, and others he describes by signs, as the Fortunate Islands. The same [t] author takes notice of his accounts concerning the several soils, plants, animals, and customs; as Egypt's being fertile of medicinal herbs; Lybia's fruitfulness, where the ewes have horns, and yean thrice a year, &c. which are knowledges that make geography more various and profitable. But what all have agreed to celebrate is his description of Greece, (which had laws made for its preservation, and contests between governments decided by its authority): which [u] Strabo acknowledges to have no epithet or ornamental expression for any place, that is not drawn from its nature, quality, or circumstances; and professes (after so long an interval) to deviate from it only where the country had undergone alterations, that cast the description into obscurity.

Rhetoric.

In his time rhetoric was not known; that art took its rise out of poetry, which was not till then established. 'The oratorial elocution (says Strabo [w]) is but an imitation of the poetical: this appeared first and was approved: they who imitated it took off the measures, but still preserved all the other parts of poetry in their writings; such were Cadmus the Milesian, Pherecydes, and Hecatæus. Then their followers took something more

[t] Strabo, l. 1. [u] Strabo, l. 8. [w] Strabo, l. 1.

from what was left, and at last elocution descended into the prose which is now among us.' But if rhetoric is owing to poetry, the obligation is still more due to Homer. He (as Quintilian [x] tells us) gave both the pattern and rise to all the parts of it. 'Hic omnibus eloquentiæ partibus exemplum et ortum dedit: hunc nemo in magnis rebus sublimitate, in parvis proprietate, superavit. Idem lætus et pressus, jucundus et gravis, tum copiâ tum brevitate admirabilis, nec poeticâ modo sed oratoriâ virtute eminentissimus.' From him therefore they who settled the art found it proper to deduce the rules, which was easily done when they had divided their observations into the kinds and the ornaments of elocution. For the kinds, 'the ancients (says A. Gell. [y]) settled them according to the three which they observed in his principal speakers; his Ulysses, who is magnificent and flowing; his Menelaus, who is short and close; and his Nestor, who is moderate and dispassioned, and has a kind of middle eloquence participating of both the former.' And for the ornaments, Aristotle,[z] the great master of the rhetoricians, shews what deference is due to Homer, when he orders the orator to lay down his heads, and express both the manners and affections of his work, with an imitation of that diction and those figures which the divine Homer excelled in. This is the constant language of those who succeeded

[x] Quintil. l. 10. cap. 1.

[y] Aulus Gell. l. 7. cap. 14.

[z] Arist. Topic.

him; and the opinion so far prevailed as to make Quintilian [a] observe, that they who have written concerning the art of speaking take from Homer most of the instances of their similitudes, amplifications, examples, digressions, and arguments.

Natural philosophy.

As to natural philosophy, the age was not arrived when the Greeks cultivated and reduced into system the principles of it which they learned from Egypt: yet we see many of these principles delivered up and down in his work. But as this is a branch of learning which does not lie much in the way of a poet who speaks of heroes and wars, the desire to prove his knowledge this way has only run Politian [b] and others into trifling inferences; as when they would have it that he understood the secrets of philosophy because he mentions sun, rain, wind, and thunder. The most plausible way of making out his knowledge in this kind, is by supposing he couched it in allegories, and that he sometimes used the names of the gods as his terms for the elements, as the chemists now use them for metals. But in applying this to him we must tread very carefully; not searching for allegory too industriously, where the passage may instruct by example; and endeavouring rather to find the fable an ornament to plain truths, than to make it a cover to curious and unknown problems.

Physic.

As for medicine, something of it must have been understood in that age;

[a] Quint. l. 10. [b] Politian. Præfatio in Hom.

though in Greece it was so far from perfection that what concerned diet was invented long after by Hippocrates. The accidents of life make the search after remedies too indispensable a duty to be neglected at any time. Accordingly he [c] tells us that the Egyptians, who had many medicinal plants in their country, were all physicians; and perhaps he might have learned his own skill from his acquaintance with that nation. The state of war which Greece had lived in required a knowledge in the healing of wounds: and this might make him breed his princes, Achilles, Patroclus, Podalirius, and Machaon, to the science. What Homer thus attributes to others, he knew himself, and, he has given us reason to believe, not slightly: for if we consider his insight into the structure of the human body, it is so nice that he has been judged by some to have wounded his heroes with too much science: or if we observe his cure of wounds, which are the accidents proper to an epic poem, we find him directing the chirurgical operation, sometimes infusing lenitives,[d] and at other times bitter powders, when the effusion of blood required astringent qualities.

Statuary.

For statuary, it appears by the accounts of Egypt and the Palladium that there was enough of it very early in the world for those images which were required in the worship of their gods; but there are none mentioned as valuable in Greece so early, nor was the art established

[c] Odyss. l. iv. v. 231.

[d] Iliad. iv. v. 218. and Iliad. xi. in fine.

on its rules before Homer. He found it agreeable to the worship in use, and necessary for its machinery, that his gods should be clothed in bodies: wherefore he took care to give them such as carried the utmost perfection of the human form; and distinguished from each other, even in this superior beauty, with such marks as were agreeable to each of the deities. 'This,' says Strabo,[e] 'awakened the conceptions of the most eminent statuaries, while they strove to keep up the grandeur of that idea which Homer had impressed upon the imagination, as we read of Phidias concerning their statue of Jupiter.' And because they copied their gods from him in their best performances, his descriptions became the characters which were afterwards pursued in all works of good taste. Hence came the common saying of the ancients, 'That either Homer was the only man who had seen the forms of the gods, or the only one who had shewn them to men;' a passage which Madam Dacier[f] wrests to prove the truth of his theology, different from Strabo's acceptation of it.

There are, besides what we have spoken of, other sciences pretended to be found in him. Thus Macrobius discovers that the chain with which Jupiter[g] says he could lift the world is a metaphysical notion, that means a connexion of all things from the Supreme Being to the meanest part of the creation. Others,

[e] Strabo, l. 8. [f] Dacier, Preface to Homer.

[g] Il. viii. v. 19. Vid. Macrob. de somn. Scip. l. 1. c. 14.

to prove him skilful in judicial astrology, bring a quotation concerning the births of Hector[h] and Polydamas on the same night; who were nevertheless of different qualifications, one excelling in war, and the other in eloquence. Others again will have him to be versed in magic, from his stories concerning Circe. These, and many of the like nature, are interpretations strained or trifling, such as are not wanted for a proof of Homer's learning, and by which we contribute nothing to raise his character, while we sacrifice our judgment in the eyes of others.

It is sufficient to have gone thus far in shewing he was the father of learning, a soul capable of ranging over the whole creation with an intellectual view, shining alone in an age of obscurity, and shining beyond those who have had the advantage of more learned ages; leaving behind him a work not only adorned with all the knowledge of his own time, but in which he has beforehand broken up the fountains of several sciences which were brought nearer to perfection by posterity: a work which shall always stand at the top of the sublime character, to be gazed at by readers with an admiration of its perfection, and by writers with a despair that it should ever be emulated with success.

[h] Il. xviii. v. 252.

THE

FIRST BOOK

OF THE

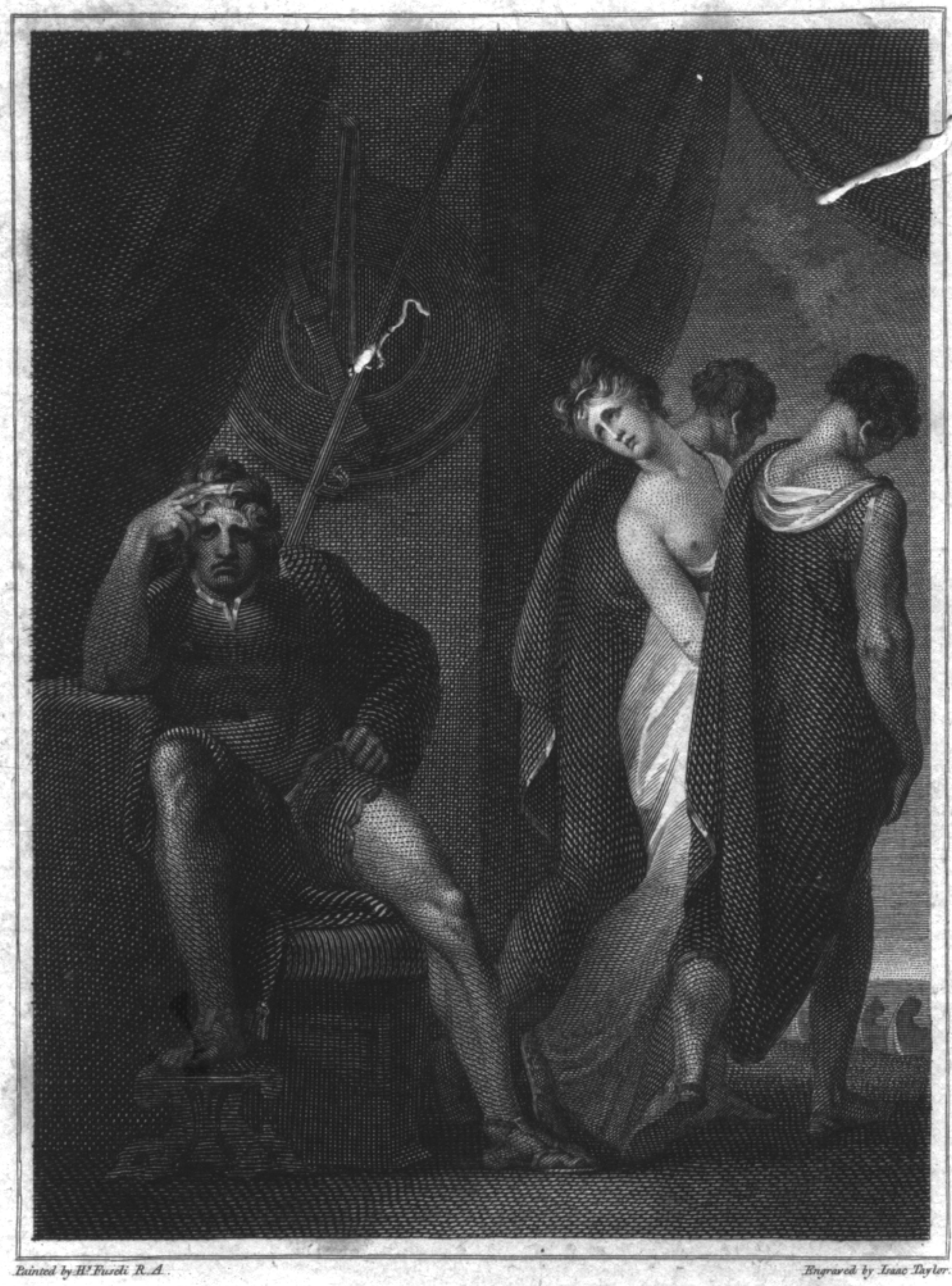
ILIAD.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE CONTENTION OF ACHILLES AND AGEMEMNON.

In the war of Troy, the Greeks having sacked some of the neighbouring towns, and taken from thence two beautiful captives, Chryseïs and Briseïs, allotted the first to Agamemnon, and the last to Achilles. Chryses, the father of Chryseïs, and priest of Apollo, comes to the Grecian camp to ransom her; with which the action of the poem opens, in the tenth year of the siege. The priest being refused, and insolently dismissed by Agamemnon, intreats for vengeance from his god; who inflicts a pestilence on the Greeks. Achilles calls a council, and encourages Chalcas to declare the cause of it; who attributes it to the refusal of Chryseïs. The king, being obliged to send back his captive, enters into a furious contest with Achilles, which Nestor pacifies; however, as he had the absolute command of the army, he seizes on Briseïs in revenge. Achilles in discontent withdraws himself and his forces from the rest of the Greeks; and complaining to Thetis, she supplicates Jupiter to render them sensible of the wrong done to her son, by giving victory to the Trojans. Jupiter granting her suit incenses Juno: between whom the debate runs high, till they are reconciled by the address of Vulcan.

The time of two and twenty days is taken up in this book; nine during the plague, one in the council and quarrel of the princes, and twelve for Jupiter's stay with the Æthiopians, at whose return Thetis prefers her petition. The scene lies in the Grecian camp, then changes to Chrysa, and lastly to Olympus.



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BOOK I.

ACHILLES' wrath, to Greece the direful spring
Of woes unnumber'd, heav'nly goddess, sing!
That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain;
Whose limbs unbury'd on the naked shore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore:
Since great Achilles and Atrides strove,
Such was the sov'reign doom, and such the will of Jove!
Declare, O muse! in what ill-fated hour
Sprung the fierce strife, from what offended pow'r?
Latona's son a dire contagion spread,
And heap'd the camp with mountains of the dead;
The king of men his rev'rend priest defy'd,
And for the king's offence the people died.
For Chryses sought with costly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the victor's chain.
Suppliant the venerable father stands;
Apollo's awful ensigns grace his hands:
By these he begs; and, lowly bending down,
Extends the sceptre and the laurel crown.

He sued to all, but chief implor'd for grace
The brother-kings, of Atreus' royal race.
Ye kings and warriors! may your vows be crown'd,
And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground.
May Jove restore you, when your toils are o'er,
Safe to the pleasures of your native shore.
But, oh! relieve a wretched parent's pain,
And give Chryseïs to these arms again;
If mercy fail, yet let my presents move,
And dread avenging Phœbus, son of Jove.
The Greeks in shouts their joint assent declare,
The priest to rev'rence, and release the fair.
Not so Atrides: he, with kingly pride,
Repuls'd the sacred sire, and thus reply'd:
Hence on thy life, and fly these hostile plains,
Nor ask, presumptuous, what the king detains:
Hence, with thy laurel crown, and golden rod;
Nor trust too far those ensigns of thy god.
Mine is thy daughter, priest, and shall remain;
And pray'rs, and tears, and bribes, shall plead in vain;
Till time shall rifle ev'ry youthful grace,
And age dismiss her from my cold embrace,
In daily labours of the loom employ'd,
Or doom'd to deck the bed she once enjoy'd.

Hence then; to Argos shall the maid retire,
Far from her native soil and weeping sire.
The trembling priest along the shore return'd,
And in the anguish of a father mourn'd.
Disconsolate, not daring to complain,
Silent he wander'd by the sounding main:
Till, safe at distance, to his god he prays,
The god who darts around the world his rays.
O Smintheus! sprung from fair Latona's line,
Thou guardian pow'r of Cilla the divine,
Thou source of light! whom Tenedos adores,
And whose bright presence gilds thy Chrysa's shores:
If e'er with wreaths I hung thy sacred fane,
Or fed the flames with fat of oxen slain;
God of the silver bow! thy shafts employ,
Avenge thy servant, and the Greeks destroy.
Thus Chryses pray'd:—the fav'ring pow'r attends,
And from Olympus' lofty tops descends.
Bent was his bow, the Grecian hearts to wound;
Fierce as he mov'd, his silver shafts resound.
Breathing revenge, a sudden night he spread,
And gloomy darkness roll'd about his head.
The fleet in view, he twang'd his deadly bow,
And hissing fly the feather'd fates below.

On mules and dogs th' infection first began;
And last, the vengeful arrows fix'd in man.
For nine long nights, through all the dusky air
The pyres, thick-flaming, shot a dismal glare.
But ere the tenth revolving day was run,
Inspir'd by Juno, Thetis' godlike son
Conven'd to council all the Grecian train;
For much the goddess mourn'd her heroes slain.
Th' assembly seated, rising o'er the rest,
Achilles thus the king of men addrest:

Why leave we not the fatal Trojan shore,
And measure back the seas we cross'd before?
The plague destroying whom the sword would spare,
'Tis time to save the few remains of war.
But let some prophet, or some sacred sage,
Explore the cause of great Apollo's rage;
Or learn the wasteful vengeance to remove
By mystic dreams, for dreams descend from Jove.
If broken vows this heavy curse have laid,
Let altars smoke, and hecatombs be paid.
So heav'n aton'd shall dying Greece restore,
And Phœbus dart his burning shafts no more.

He said, and sat: when Chalcas thus reply'd;
Chalcas the wise, the Grecian priest and guide,

That sacred seer, whose comprehensive view
The past, the present, and the future knew:
Uprising slow, the venerable sage
Thus spoke the prudence and the fears of age.
Belov'd of Jove, Achilles! wouldst thou know
Why angry Phœbus bends his fatal bow?
First give thy faith, and plight a prince's word
Of sure protection, by thy pow'r and sword:
For I must speak what wisdom would conceal,
And truths, invidious to the great, reveal.
Bold is the task, when subjects, grown too wise,
Instruct a monarch where his error lies;
For though we deem the short-liv'd fury past,
'Tis sure the mighty will revenge at last.
To whom Pelides. From thy inmost soul
Speak what thou know'st, and speak without control.
E'en by that god I swear, who rules the day,
To whom thy hands the vows of Greece convey,
And whose blest oracles thy lips declare;
Long as Achilles breathes this vital air,
No daring Greek, of all the num'rous band,
Against his priest shall lift an impious hand;
Not e'en the chief by whom our hosts are led,
The king of kings, shall touch that sacred head.

Encourag'd thus, the blameless man replies:
Nor vows unpaid, nor slighted sacrifice,
But he, our chief, provok'd the raging pest,
Apollo's vengeance for his injur'd priest.
Nor will the god's awaken'd fury cease,
But plagues shall spread, and fun'ral fires increase,
Till the great king, without a ransom paid,
To her own Chrysa send the black-ey'd maid.
Perhaps, with added sacrifice and pray'r,
The priest may pardon, and the god may spare.
The prophet spoke: when with a gloomy frown
The monarch started from his shining throne;
Black choler fill'd his breast that boil'd with ire,
And from his eye-balls flash'd the living fire.
Augur accurst! denouncing mischief still,
Prophet of plagues, for ever boding ill!
Still must that tongue some wounding message bring,
And still thy priestly pride provoke thy king?
For this are Phœbus' oracles explor'd,
To teach the Greeks to murmur at their lord?
For this with falsehoods is my honour stain'd,
Is heav'n offended, and a priest profan'd;
Because my prize, my beauteous maid, I hold,
And heav'nly charms prefer to proffer'd gold?

A maid, unmatch'd in manners as in face,
Skill'd in each art, and crown'd with ev'ry grace;
Not half so dear were Clytæmnestra's charms,
When first her blooming beauties blest my arms.
Yet if the gods demand her, let her sail;
Our cares are only for the public weal:
Let me be deem'd the hateful cause of all,
And suffer, rather than my people fall.
The prize, the beauteous prize, I will resign,
So dearly valu'd, and so justly mine.
But since for common good I yield the fair,
My private loss let grateful Greece repair;
Nor unrewarded let your prince complain,
That he alone has fought and bled in vain.
Insatiate king (Achilles thus replies),
Fond of the pow'r, but fonder of the prize!
Would'st thou the Greeks their lawful prey should yield,
The due reward of many a well-fought field?
The spoils of cities raz'd and warriors slain,
We share with justice, as with toil we gain:
But to resume whate'er thy av'rice craves,
(That trick of tyrants) may be borne by slaves.
Yet if our chief for plunder only fight,
The spoils of Ilion shall thy loss requite,

Whene'er, by Jove's decree, our conqu'ring pow'rs
Shall humble to the dust her lofty tow'rs.
Then thus the king. Shall I my prize resign
With tame content, and thou possess'd of thine?
Great as thou art, and like a god in fight,
Think not to rob me of a soldier's right.
At thy demand shall I restore the maid?
First let the just equivalent be paid;
Such as a king might ask; and let it be
A treasure worthy her, and worthy me.
Or grant me this, or with a monarch's claim
This hand shall seize some other captive dame.
The mighty Ajax shall his prize resign;
Ulysses' spoils, or e'en thy own, be mine.
The man who suffers, loudly may complain;
And rage he may, but he shall rage in vain.
But this when time requires—It now remains
We launch a bark to plough the watry plains,
And waft the sacrifice to Chrysa's shores,
With chosen pilots, and with lab'ring oars.
Soon shall the fair the sable ship ascend,
And some deputed prince the charge attend;
This Creta's king, or Ajax shall fulfil,
Or wise Ulysses see perform'd our will;

Or, if our royal pleasure shall ordain,
Achilles' self conduct her o'er the main;
Let fierce Achilles, dreadful in his rage,
The god propitiate, and the pest assuage.
At this, Pelides, frowning stern, reply'd:
O tyrant, arm'd with insolence and pride!
Inglorious slave to int'rest, ever join'd
With fraud, unworthy of a royal mind!
What gen'rous Greek, obedient to thy word,
Shall form an ambush, or shall lift the sword?
What cause have I war at thy decree?
The distant Trojans never injur'd me:
To Phthia's realms no hostile troops they led:
Safe in her vales my warlike coursers fed;
Far hence remov'd, the hoarse-resounding main,
And walls of rocks, secure my native reign,
Whose fruitful soil luxuriant harvests grace,
Rich in her fruits, and in her martial race.
Hither we sail'd, a voluntary throng,
T' avenge a private, not a public wrong:
What else to Troy th' assembled nations draws,
But thine, ungrateful, and thy brother's cause?
Is this the pay our blood and toils deserve;
Disgrac'd and injur'd by the man we serve?

And dar'st thou threat to snatch my prize away,
Due to the deeds of many a dreadful day?
A prize as small, O tyrant! match'd with thine,
As thy own actions if compar'd to mine.
Thine in each conquest is the wealthy prey,
Though mine the sweat and danger of the day.
Some trivial present to my ships I bear;
Or barren praises pay the wounds of war.
But know, proud monarch, I'm thy slave no more;
My fleet shall waft me to Thessalia's shore.
Left by Achilles on the Trojan plain,
What spoils, what conquests shall Atrides gain?
To this the king: Fly, mighty warrior! fly;
Thy aid we need not, and thy threats defy.
There want not chiefs in such a cause to fight;
And Jove himself shall guard a monarch's right.
Of all the kings, (the gods' distinguish'd care)
To pow'r superior none such hatred bear:
Strife and debate thy restless soul employ,
And wars and horrors are thy savage joy.
If thou hast strength, 'twas heav'n that strength bestow'd;
For know, vain man! thy valour is from God.
Haste, launch thy vessels, fly with speed away;
Rule thy own realms with arbitrary sway:

I heed thee not, but prize at equal rate
Thy short-liv'd friendship, and thy groundless hate.
Go, threat thy earth-born Myrmidons:—but here
'Tis mine to threaten, prince, and thine to fear.
Know, if the god the beauteous dame demand,
My bark shall waft her to her native land;
But then prepare, imperious prince! prepare,
Fierce as thou art, to yield thy captive fair:
E'en in thy tent I'll seize the blooming prize,
Thy lov'd Briseïs with the radiant eyes.
Hence shalt thou prove my might, and curse the hour
Thou stood'st a rival of imperial pow'r;
And hence to all our host it shall be known
That kings are subject to the gods alone.

Achilles heard, with grief and rage oppress,
His heart swell'd high, and labour'd in his breast;
Distracting thoughts by turns his bosom rul'd;
Now fir'd by wrath, and now by reason cool'd:
That prompts his hand to draw the deadly sword,
Force through the Greeks, and pierce their haughty lord;
This whispers soft, his vengeance to controul,
And calm the rising tempest of his soul.

Just as in anguish of suspense he stay'd,
While half unsheath'd appear'd the glitt'ring blade,
Minerva swift descended from above,
Sent by the sister and the wife of Jove;
(For both the princes claim'd her equal care)
Behind she stood, and by the golden hair
Achilles seiz'd; to him alone confest;
A sable cloud conceal'd her from the rest.
He sees, and sudden to the goddess cries,
Known by the flames that sparkle from her eyes:
Descends Minerva, in her guardian care,
A heav'nly witness of the wrongs I bear
From Atreus' son?—Then let those eyes that view
The daring crime, behold the vengeance too.
Forbear! (the progeny of Jove replies)
To calm thy fury I forsake the skies:
Let great Achilles, to the gods resign'd,
To reason yield the empire o'er his mind.
By awful Juno this command is giv'n;
The king and you are both the care of heav'n.
The force of keen reproaches let him feel;
But sheathe, obedient, thy revenging steel,
For I pronounce (and trust a heav'nly pow'r)
Thy injur'd honour has its fated hour,

When the proud monarch shall thy arms implore,
And bribe thy friendship with a boundless store.
Then let revenge no longer bear the sway;
Command thy passions, and the gods obey.
To her Pelides. With regardful ear
'Tis just, O goddess! I thy dictates hear.
Hard as it is, my vengeance I suppress:
Those who revere the gods, the gods will bless.
He said, observant of the blue-ey'd maid;
Then in the sheath return'd the shining blade.
The goddess swift to high Olympus flies,
And joins the sacred senate of the skies.
Nor yet the rage his boiling breast forsook,
Which thus redoubling on Atrides broke.
O monster! mix'd of insolence and fear,
Thou dog in forehead, but in heart a deer!
When wert thou known in ambush'd fights to dare,
Or nobly face the horrid front of war?
'Tis ours, the chance of fighting fields to try;
Thine to look on, and bid the valiant die:
So much 'tis safer through the camp to go,
And rob a subject, than despoil a foe.
Scourge of thy people, violent and base!
Sent in Jove's anger on a slavish race;

Who, lost to sense of gen'rous freedom past,
Are tam'd to wrongs;—or this had been thy last.
Now by this sceptre, hear me swear.
Which never more shall leaves or blossoms bear,
Which sever'd from the trunk (as I from thee)
On the bare mountains left its parent tree;
This sceptre, form'd by temper'd steel to prove
An ensign of the delegates of Jove,
From whom the pow'r of laws and justice springs:
(Tremendous oath! inviolate to kings)
By this I swear:—when bleeding Greece again
Shall call Achilles, she shall call in vain.
When, flush'd with slaughter, Hector comes to spread
The purpled shore with mountains of the dead,
Then shalt thou mourn th' affront thy madness gave,
Forc'd to deplore, when impotent to save:
Then rage in bitterness of soul, to know
This act has made the bravest Greek thy foe.
He spoke; and furious hurl'd against the ground
His sceptre starr'd with golden studs around.
Then sternly silent sat. With like disdain
The raging king return'd his frowns again.

To calm their passion with the words of age,
Slow from his seat arose the Pylian sage,
Experienc'd Nestor, in persuasion skill'd;
Words, sweet as honey, from his lips distill'd:
Two generations now had pass'd away,
Wise by his rules, and happy by his sway;
Two ages o'er his native realm he reign'd,
And now th' example of the third remain'd.
All view'd with awe the venerable man;
Who thus with mild benevolence began:
What shame, what woe is this to Greece! what joy
To Troy's proud monarch, and the friends of Troy!
That adverse gods commit to stern debate
The best, the bravest, of the Grecian state.
Young as ye are, this youthful heat restrain,
Nor think your Nestor's years and wisdom vain.
A godlike race of heroes once I knew,
Such as no more these aged eyes shall view!
Lives there a chief to match Pirithous' fame,
Dryas the bold, or Ceneus' deathless name;
Theseus, endu'd with more than mortal might,
Or Polyphemus, like the gods in fight?
With these of old to toils of battle bred,
In early youth my hardy days I led;

Fir'd with the thirst which virtuous envy breeds,
And smit with love of honourable deeds.
Strongest of men, they pierc'd the mountain-boar,
Rang'd the wild deserts red with monsters' gore,
And from their hills the shaggy Centaurs tore.
Yet these with soft persuasive arts I sway'd;
When Nestor spoke, they listen'd and obey'd.
If in my youth, e'en these esteem'd me wise;
Do you, young warriors, hear my age advise.
Atrides, seize not on the beauteous slave;
That prize the Greeks by common suffrage gave:
Nor thou, Achilles, treat our prince with pride;
Let kings be just, and sov'reign pow'r preside.
Thee, the first honours of the war adorn,
Like gods in strength, and of a goddess born;
Him, awful majesty exalts above
The pow'rs of earth, and sceptred sons of Jove.
Let both unite with well-consenting mind,
So shall authority with strength be join'd.
Leave me, O king! to calm Achilles' rage;
Rule thou thyself, as more advanc'd in age.
Forbid it, gods! Achilles should be lost,
The pride of Greece, and bulwark of our host.

This said, he ceas'd. The king of men replies:
Thy years are awful, and thy words are wise.

But that imperious, that unconquer'd soul,
No laws can limit, no respect controul.
Before his pride must his superiors fall;
His word the law, and he the lord of all?
Him must our hosts, our chiefs, ourself obey?
What king can bear a rival in his sway?
Grant that the gods his matchless force have giv'n;
Has foul reproach a privilege from heav'n?

Here on the monarch's speech Achilles broke,
And furious, thus, and interrupting spoke.
Tyrant, I well deserv'd thy galling chain,
To live thy slave, and still to serve in vain,
Should I submit to each unjust decree:
Command thy vassals, but command not me.
Seize on Briseïs, whom the Grecians doom'd
My prize of war, yet tamely see resum'd;
And seize secure; no more Achilles draws
His conqu'ring sword in any woman's cause.
The gods command me to forgive the past;
But let this first invasion be the last:
For know, thy blood, when next thou dar'st invade,
Shall stream in vengeance on my reeking blade.

At this they ceas'd; the stern debate expir'd:
The chiefs in sullen majesty retir'd.

Achilles with Patroclus took his way
Where near his tents his hollow vessels lay.
Meantime Atrides launch'd with num'rous oars
A well-rigg'd ship for Chrysa's sacred shores:
High on the deck was fair Chryseïs plac'd,
And sage Ulysses with the conduct grac'd:
Safe in her sides the hecatomb they stow'd,
Then swiftly sailing, cut the liquid road.

The host to expiate, next the king prepares,
With pure lustrations, and with solemn pray'rs.
Wash'd by the briny wave, the pious train
Are cleans'd; and cast th' ablutions in the main.
Along the shore whole hecatombs were laid,
And bulls and goats to Phœbus' altars paid;
The sable fumes in curling spires arise,
And waft their grateful odours to the skies.

The army thus in sacred rites engag'd,
Atrides still with deep resentment rag'd.
To wait his will two sacred heralds stood,
Talthybius and Eurybates the good.
Haste to the fierce Achilles' tent (he cries)
Thence bear Briseïs as our royal prize:
Submit he must; or if they will not part,
Ourself in arms shall tear her from his heart.

Th' unwilling heralds act their lord's commands;
Pensive they walk along the barren sands:
Arriv'd, the hero in his tent they find,
With gloomy aspect, on his arm reclin'd.
At awful distance long they silent stand,
Loth to advance, or speak their hard command;
Decent confusion! This the godlike man
Perceiv'd, and thus with accent mild began.
With leave and honour enter our abodes,
Ye sacred ministers of men and gods!
I know your message; by constraint you came;
Not you, but your imperious lord I blame.
Patroclus, haste, the fair Briseïs bring;
Conduct my captive to the haughty king.
But witness, heralds, and proclaim my vow,
Witness to gods above, and men below!
But first, and loudest, to your prince declare,
That lawless tyrant whose commands you bear;
Unmov'd as death Achilles shall remain,
Though prostrate Greece should bleed at ev'ry vein:
The raging chief in frantic passion lost,
Blind to himself, and useless to his host,
Unskill'd to judge the future by the past,
In blood and slaughter shall repent at last.

Patroclus now th' unwilling beauty brought;
She, in soft sorrows, and in pensive thought,
Pass'd silent, as the heralds held her hand,
And oft look'd back, slow-moving o'er the strand
Not so his loss the fierce Achilles bore;
But sad, retiring to the sounding shore,
O'er the wild margin of the deep he hung,
That kindred deep, from whence his mother sprung:
There, bath'd in tears of anger and disdain,
Thus loud lamented to the stormy main.

O parent goddess! since in early bloom
Thy son must fall, by too severe a doom;
Sure, to so short a race of glory born,
Great Jove in justice should this span adorn:
Honour and fame at least the thund'rer ow'd;
And ill he pays the promise of a god,
If yon proud monarch thus thy son defies,
Obscures my glories, and resumes my prize.

Far from the deep recesses of the main,
Where aged Ocean holds his wat'ry reign,
The goddess-mother heard. The waves divide;
And like a mist she rose above the tide;
Beheld him mourning on the naked shores,
And thus the sorrows of his soul explores.

Why grieves my son? Thy anguish let me share;
Reveal the cause, and trust a parent's care.
He deeply sighing said: To tell my woe,
Is but to mention what too well you know.
From Thebè, sacred to Apollo's name,
(Aëtion's realm) our conqu'ring army came,
With treasure loaded and triumphant spoils,
Whose just division crown'd the soldier's toils;
But bright Chryseïs, heav'nly prize! was led,
By vote selected, to the gen'ral's bed.
The priest of Phœbus sought by gifts to gain
His beauteous daughter from the victor's chain;
The fleet he reach'd, and, lowly bending down,
Held forth the sceptre and the laurel crown,
Intreating all; but chief implor'd for grace
The brother-kings of Atreus' royal race:
The gen'rous Greeks their joint consent declare,
The priest to rev'rence, and release the fair;
Not so Atrides: he, with wonted pride,
The sire insulted, and his gifts deny'd:
Th' insulted sire (his god's peculiar care)
To Phœbus pray'd, and Phœbus heard the pray'r:

A prophet then, inspir'd by heav'n, arose,
And points the crime, and thence derives the woes:
Myself the first th' assembled chiefs incline
T' avert the vengeance of the pow'r divine;
Then rising in his wrath, the monarch storm'd;
Incens'd he threaten'd, and his threats perform'd:
The fair Chryseïs to her sire was sent,
With offer'd gifts to make the god relent;
But now he seiz'd Briseïs' heav'nly charms,
And of my valour's prize defrauds my arms,
Defrauds the votes of all the Grecian train;
And service, faith, and justice plead in vain.
But, goddess! thou thy suppliant son attend,
To high Olympus' shining court ascend,
Urge all the ties to former service ow'd,
And sue for vengeance to the thund'ring god.
Oft hast thou triumph'd in the glorious boast,
That thou stood'st forth of all th' ethereal host,
When bold rebellion shook the realms above,
Th' undaunted guard of cloud-compelling Jove;
When the bright partner of his awful reign,
The warlike maid, and monarch of the main,
The traitor-gods, by mad ambition driv'n,
Durst threat with chains th' omnipotence of heav'n.

Then, call'd by thee, the monster Titan came,
(Whom gods Briareus, men Ægeon name)
Through wond'ring skies enormous stalk'd along;
Not he that shakes the solid earth so strong:
With giant-pride at Jove's high throne he stands,
And brandish'd round him all his hundred hands:
Th' affrighted gods confess'd their awful lord,
They dropt the fetters, trembled, and ador'd.
This, goddess, this to his remembrance call,
Embrace his knees, at his tribunal fall;
Conjure him far to drive the Grecian train,
To hurl them headlong to their fleet and main,
To heap the shores with copious death, and bring
The Greeks to know the curse of such a king:
Let Agamemnon lift his haughty head
O'er all his wide dominion of the dead,
And mourn in blood that e'er he durst disgrace
The boldest warrior of the Grecian race.

Unhappy son! (fair Thetis thus replies,
While tears celestial trickle from her eyes)
Why have I born thee with a mother's throes,
To fates averse, and nurs'd for future woes?
So short a space the light of heav'n to view!
So short a space! and fill'd with sorrow too!

O might a parent's careful wish prevail,
Far, far from Ilion should thy vessels sail,
And thou, from camps remote, the danger shun,
Which now, alas! too nearly threats my son.
Yet (what I can) to move thy suit I'll go
To great Olympus crown'd with fleecy snow.
Meantime, secure within thy ships, from far
Behold the field, nor mingle in the war.
The sire of gods and all th' ethereal train,
On the warm limits of the farthest main,
Now mix with mortals, nor disdain to grace
The feasts of Æthiopia's blameless race;
Twelve days the pow'rs indulge the genial rite,
Returning with the twelfth revolving light.
Then will I mount the brazen dome, and move
The high tribunal of immortal Jove.
  The goddess spoke: the rolling waves unclose;
Then down the steep she plung'd from whence she rose,
And left him sorrowing on the lonely coast,
In wild resentment for the fair he lost.
  In Chrysa's port now sage Ulysses rode;
Beneath the deck the destin'd victims stow'd:
The sails they furl'd, they lash the mast aside,
And dropt their anchors, and the pinnace ty'd.

Next on the shore their hecatomb they land;
Chryseïs last descending on the strand.
Her, thus returning from the furrow'd main,
Ulysses led to Phœbus' sacred fane;
Where at his solemn altar, as the maid
He gave to Chryses, thus the hero said.

Hail, rev'rend priest! to Phœbus' awful dome
A suppliant I from great Atrides come:
Unransom'd here receive the spotless fair;
Accept the hecatomb the Greeks prepare;
And may thy god who scatters darts around,
Aton'd by sacrifice, desist to wound.

At this, the sire embrac'd the maid again,
So sadly lost, so lately sought in vain.
Then near the altar of the darting king,
Dispos'd in rank their hecatomb they bring;
With water purify their hands, and take
The sacred off'ring of the salted cake;
While thus with arms devoutly rais'd in air,
And solemn voice, the priest directs his pray'r.

God of the silver bow, thy ear incline,
Whose pow'r encircles Cilla the divine;
Whose sacred eye thy Tenedos surveys,
And gilds fair Chrysa with distinguish'd rays!

If, fir'd to vengeance at thy priest's request,
Thy direful darts inflict the raging pest;
Once more attend! avert the wasteful woe,
And smile propitious, and unbend thy bow.
So Chryses pray'd. Apollo heard his pray'r:
And now the Greeks their hecatomb prepare;
Between their horns the salted barley threw,
And with their heads to heav'n the victims slew:
The limbs they sever from th' inclosing hide;
The thighs, selected to the gods, divide:
On these, in double cawls involv'd with art,
The choicest morsels lay from ev'ry part.
The priest himself before his altar stands;
And burns the off'ring with his holy hands,
Pours the black wine, and sees the flames aspire;
The youth with instruments surround the fire:
The thighs thus sacrific'd, and entrails drest,
Th' assistants part, transfix, and roast the rest:
Then spread the tables, the repast prepare,
Each takes his seat, and each receives his share.
When now the rage of hunger was represt,
With pure libations they conclude the feast;
The youths with wine the copious goblets crown'd,
And pleas'd, dispense the flowing bowls around;

With hymns divine the joyous banquet ends,
The pæans lengthen'd till the sun descends:
The Greeks, restor'd, the grateful notes prolong;
Apollo listens, and approves the song.
'Twas night; the chiefs beside their vessel lie,
Till rosy morn had purpled o'er the sky:
Then launch, and hoist the mast: indulgent gales,
Supply'd by Phœbus, fill the swelling sails;
The milk-white canvas bellying as they blow,
The parted ocean foams and roars below:
Above the bounding billows swift they flew,
Till now the Grecian camp appear'd in view.
Far on the beach they haul their bark to land,
(The crooked keel divides the yellow sand)
Then part, where stretch'd along the winding bay
The ships and tents in mingled prospect lay.
But raging still, amidst his navy sat
The stern Achilles, stedfast in his hate;
Nor mix'd in combat, nor in council join'd;
But wasting cares lay heavy on his mind:
In his black thoughts revenge and slaughter roll,
And scenes of blood rise dreadful in his soul.
Twelve days were past, and now the dawning light
The gods had summon'd to th' Olympian height:

Jove, first ascending from the wat'ry bow'rs,
Leads the long order of ethereal pow'rs.
When, like the morning mist in early day,
Rose from the flood the daughter of the sea;
And to the seats divine her flight addrest.
There, far apart, and high above the rest,
The thund'rer sat; where old Olympus shrouds
His hundred heads in heav'n, and props the clouds.
Suppliant the goddess stood: one hand she plac'd
Beneath his beard, and one his knees embrac'd.
If e'er, O father of the gods! she said,
My words could please thee, or my actions aid,
Some marks of honour on my son bestow,
And pay in glory what in life you owe.
Fame is at least by heav'nly promise due
To life so short, and now dishonour'd too.
Avenge this wrong, oh ever just and wise!
Let Greece be humbled, and the Trojans rise;
Till the proud king and all th' Achaian race
Shall heap with honours him they now disgrace.

Thus Thetis spoke; but Jove in silence held
The sacred counsels of his breast conceal'd.
Not so repuls'd, the goddess closer prest,
Still grasp'd his knees, and urg'd the dear request.

O sire of gods and men! thy suppliant hear;
Refuse, or grant; for what has Jove to fear?
Or oh! declare, of all the pow'rs above,
Is wretched Thetis least the care of Jove?
She said; and, sighing, thus the god replies,
Who rolls the thunder o'er the vaulted skies.
What hast thou ask'd? Ah why should Jove engage
In foreign contests and domestic rage,
The gods' complaints, and Juno's fierce alarms,
While I, too partial, aid the Trojan arms?
Go, lest the haughty partner of my sway
With jealous eyes thy close access survey;
But part in peace, secure thy pray'r is sped:
Witness the sacred honours of our head,
The nod that ratifies the will divine,
The faithful, fix'd, irrevocable sign;
This seals thy suit, and this fulfils thy vows—
He spoke, and awful bends his sable brows,
Shakes his ambrosial curls, and gives the nod,
The stamp of fate, and sanction of the god:
High heav'n with trembling the dread signal took,
And all Olympus to the centre shook.

Swift to the seas profound the goddess flies,
Jove to his starry mansion in the skies.

The shining synod of th' immortals wait
The coming god, and from their thrones of state
Arising silent, wrapt in holy fear,
Before the majesty of heav'n appear.
Trembling they stand, while Jove assumes the throne,
All, but the god's imperious queen alone:
Late had she view'd the silver-footed dame,
And all her passions kindled into flame.
Say, artful manager of heav'n (she cries)
Who now partakes the secrets of the skies?
Thy Juno knows not the decrees of fate,
In vain the partner of imperial state.
What fav'rite goddess then those cares divides,
Which Jove in prudence from his consort hides?
To this the thund'rer: Seek not thou to find
The sacred counsels of almighty mind:
Involv'd in darkness lies the great decree,
Nor can the depths of fate be pierc'd by thee.
What fits thy knowledge, thou the first shalt know;
The first of gods above, and men below;
But thou, nor they, shall search the thoughts that roll
Deep in the close recesses of my soul.

Full on the sire the goddess of the skies
Roll'd the large orbs of her majestic eyes,
And thus return'd. Austere Saturnius, say,
From whence this wrath, or who controls thy sway?
Thy boundless will, for me, remains in force,
And all thy counsels take the destin'd course.
But 'tis for Greece I fear: for late was seen,
In close consult, the silver-footed queen.
Jove to his Thetis nothing could deny,
Nor was the signal vain that shook the sky.
What fatal favour has the goddess won,
To grace her fierce, inexorable, son?
Perhaps in Grecian blood to drench the plain,
And glut his vengeance with my people slain.
Then thus the god: Oh restless fate of pride,
That strives to learn what heav'n resolves to hide;
Vain is the search, presumptuous and abhorr'd,
Anxious to thee, and odious to thy lord.
Let this suffice: th' immutable decree
No force can shake: what is, that ought to be.
Goddess, submit, nor dare our will withstand,
But dread the pow'r of this avenging hand;
Th' united strength of all the gods above
In vain resists th' omnipotence of Jove.

The thund'rer spoke, nor durst the queen reply;
A rev'rend horror silenc'd all the sky.
The feast disturb'd, with sorrow Vulcan saw
His mother menac'd, and the gods in awe;
Peace at his heart, and pleasure his design,
Thus interpos'd the architect divine.

The wretched quarrels of the mortal state
Are far unworthy, gods! of your debate:
Let men their days in senseless strife employ,
We, in eternal peace and constant joy.
Thou, goddess-mother, with our sire comply,
Nor break the sacred union of the sky;
Lest, rouz'd to rage, he shake the blest abodes,
Launch the red lightning, and dethrone the gods.
If you submit, the thund'rer stands appeas'd;
The gracious pow'r is willing to be pleas'd.

Thus Vulcan spoke; and, rising with a bound,
The double bowl with sparkling nectar crown'd,
Which held to Juno in a cheerful way,
Goddess (he cried) be patient and obey.
Dear as you are, if Jove his arm extend,
I can but grieve, unable to defend.
What god so daring in your aid to move,
Or lift his hand against the force of Jove?

Once in your cause I felt his matchless might,
Hurl'd headlong downward from th'ethereal height;
Tost all the day in rapid circles round;
Nor till the sun descended touch'd the ground:
Breathless I fell, in giddy motion lost;
The Sinthians rais'd me on the Lemnian coast.

He said, and to her hands the goblet heav'd
Which, with a smile, the white-arm'd queen received.
Then to the rest he fill'd; and in his turn,
Each to his lips apply'd the nectar'd urn.
Vulcan with awkward grace his office plies,
And unextinguish'd laughter shakes the skies.

Thus the bless'd gods the genial day prolong,
In feasts ambrosial, and celestial song.
Apollo tun'd the lyre; the muses round
With voice alternate aid the silver sound.
Meantime the radiant sun, to mortal sight
Descending swift, roll'd down the rapid light.
Then to their starry domes the gods depart,
The shining monuments of Vulcan's art:
Jove on his couch reclin'd his awful head,
And Juno slumber'd on the golden bed.

SELECT NOTES

TO

BOOK I.

The plan of this poem is formed upon anger and its ill effects; the plan of Virgil's upon pious resignation and its rewards: and thus every passion or virtue may be the foundation of the scheme of an epic poem. This distinction between two authors who have been so successful, seemed necessary to be taken notice of, that they who would imitate either may not stumble at the very entrance, or so curb their imaginations, as to deprive us of noble morals told in a new variety of incidents. Imitation does not hinder invention: we may observe the rules of nature, and write in the spirit of those who have best hit upon them; without taking the same track, beginning in the same manner, and following the main of their story almost step by step; as most of the modern writers of epic poetry have done after one of these great poets.

V. 1.] *Μηνιν ἀειδε θεα Πηληιαδεω Αχιλη@.*

Plutarch observes there is a defect in the measure of this first line (I suppose he means in the etas of the patronymic). This, he thinks, the fiery vein of Homer, making haste to his subject, past over with a bold neglect, being conscious of his own power and perfection in the greater parts; as some (says he), who make virtue their sole aim, pass by censure in smaller matters. But perhaps we may find no occasion to suppose this a neglect in him, if we consider that the word Pelides, had he made use of it without so many alterations as he has put it to in Πηληιαδεω, would still have been true to the rules of measure. Make but a diphthong of the second eta and the iota, instead of their being two syllables (perhaps by the fault of transcribers) and the objection is gone. Or perhaps it might be designed, that the verse in which he professes to sing of violent anger should run off in the rapidity of dactyls. This art he is allowed to have used in other places, and

V. 8. *Will of Jove.*] Plutarch in his treatise of reading Poets, interprets Διος in this place to signify fate, not imagining it consistent with the goodness of the Supreme Being, or Jupiter, to contrive or practise any evil against men. Eustathius makes will here to refer to the promise which Jupiter gave to Thetis, that he would honour her son by siding with Troy, while he should be absent. But to reconcile these two opinions, perhaps the meaning may be, that when fate had decreed the destruction of Troy, Jupiter having the power of incidents to bring it to pass, fulfilled that decree by providing means for it. So that the words may thus specify the time of action from the beginning of the poem, in which those incidents worked, till the promise to Thetis was fulfilled, and the destruction of Troy ascertained to the Greeks by the death of Hector. However it is certain that this poet was not an absolute fatalist, but still supposed the power of Jove superior: for in the sixteenth Iliad we see him designing to save Sarpedon, though the fates had decreed his death, if Juno had not interposed. Neither does he exclude free-will in men; for as he attributes the destruction of the heroes to the will of Jove in the beginning of the Iliad, so he attributes the destruction of Ulysses's friends to their own folly in the beginning of the Odyssey.

Αυτων γαρ σφετερησιν ατασθαλιησιν ολοντο.

V. 9. *Declare, O muse.*] It may be questioned whether the first period ends at Διος δ' ετελειετο βουλη, and the interrogation to the muse begins with Εξ ου δη τα πρωτα—Or whether the period does not end till the words, διος Αχιλλευς, with only a single interrogation at Τις τ' αρ' σφωε θεων——? I should be inclined to favour the former, and think it a double interrogative; as Milton seems to have done in his imitation of this place at the beginning of Paradise Lost.

'——Say first what cause
Mov'd our grand parents, &c.' And just after,
'Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?'

Besides that I think the proposition concludes more nobly with the sentence, 'Such was the will of Jove.' But the latter being followed by most editions, and by all the translations I have seen

in any language, the general acceptation is here complied with, only transposing the line to keep the sentence last: and the next verses are so turned as to include the double interrogation, and at the same time do justice to another interpretation of the words Ἐξ ὑ δη τα, Ex quo tempore; which makes the date of the quarrel from whence the poem takes its rise. Chapman would have Ex quo understood of Jupiter, 'from whom' the debate was suggested; but this clashes with the line immediately following, where he asks, what god inspired the contention? and answers it was Apollo.

V. 20. *The sceptre and the laurel crown.*] There is something exceedingly venerable in this appearance of the priest. He comes with the ensigns of the god he belonged to; the laurel crown, now carried in his hand, to shew he was a supplicant; and a golden sceptre, which the ancients gave in particular to Apollo, as they did a silver one to the moon, and other sorts to the planets. Eustathius.

V. 23. *Ye kings and warriors.*] The art of this speech is remarkable. Chryses considers the constitution of the Greeks before Troy, as made up of troops partly from kingdoms and partly from democracies: wherefore he begins with a distinction which comprehends all. After this, as Apollo's priest, he prays that they may obtain the two blessings they had most in view; the conquest of Troy, and a safe return. Then, as he names his petition, he offers an extraordinary ransom; and concludes with bidding them fear the god if they refuse it; like one who from his office seems to foresee their misery, and exhorts them to shun it. Thus he endeavours to work by the art of a general application, by religion, by interest, and the insinuation of danger. This is the substance of what Eustathius remarks on this place; and, in pursuance to his last observation, the epithet 'avenging' is added to this version, that it may appear the priest foretells the anger of his god.

V. 33. *He with pride repuls'd.*] It has been remarked in honour of Homer's judgment, and the care he took of his reader's morals, that where he speaks of evil actions committed, or hard

vious expression. This passage is given as one instance of it, where he says the repulse of Chryses was a proud injurious action in Agamemnon: and it may be remarked, that before his heroes treat one another with hard language in this book, he still takes care to let us know they were under a distraction of anger. PLUTARCH, of reading Poets.

V. 44. *Or doom'd to deck the bed*, &c.] The Greek is αντιοωσαν, which signifies either 'making' the bed, or 'partaking' it. Eustathius and Madam Dacier insist very much upon its being taken in the former sense only, for fear of presenting a loose idea to the reader, and of offending against the modesty of the muse, who is supposed to relate the poem. This observation may very well become a bishop and a lady. But that Agamemnon was not studying here for civility of expression, appears from the whole tenor of his speech; and that he designed Chryseïs for more than a servant maid, may be seen from some other things he says of her, as that he preferred her to his queen Clytæmnestra, &c. the imprudence of which confession Madam Dacier herself has elsewhere animadverted upon.

V. 47. *The trembling priest.*] We may take notice here, once for all, that Homer is frequently eloquent in his very silence. Chryses says not a word in answer to the insults of Agamemnon, but walks pensively along the shore: and the melancholy flowing of the verse admirably expresses the condition of the mournful and deserted father.

Βη δ' ακεων παρα θινα πολυφλοισβοιο θαλασσης.

V. 61. *The fav'ring pow'r attends.*] Upon this first prayer in the poem, Eustathius takes occasion to observe, that the poet is careful throughout his whole work to let no prayer ever fail entirely which has justice on its side; but he who prays, either kills his enemy, or has signs given him that he has been heard, or his friends return, or his undertaking succeeds, or some other visible good happens. So far instructive and useful to life has Homer made his fable.

V. 67. *He twang'd his deadly bow.*] In the tenth year of the siege of Troy a plague happened in the Grecian camp, occasioned perhaps by immoderate heats and gross exhalations. At the introduction of this incident Homer begins his poem, and takes occasion from it to open the scene of action with a most beautiful allegory. He sup-

poses that such afflictions are sent from heaven for the punishment of our evil actions; and because the sun was a principal instrument of it, he says it was sent to punish Agamemnon for despising that god, and injuring his priest. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 69. *Mules and dogs.*] Hippocrates observes two things of plagues; that their cause is in the air, and that different animals are differently touched by them, according to their nature or nourishment. This philosophy Spondanus refers to the plague here mentioned. First, the cause is in the air, by reason of the darts or beams of Apollo. Secondly, the mules and dogs are said to die sooner than the men; partly because they have by nature a quickness of smell, which makes the infection sooner perceivable; and partly by the nourishment they take, their feeding on the earth with prone heads making the exhalation more easy to be sucked in with it. Thus has Hippocrates, so long after Homer writ, subscribed to his knowledge in the rise and progress of this distemper. There have been some who have referred this passage to a religious sense, making the death of the mules and dogs before the men to point out a kind of method of Providence in punishing, whereby it sends some previous afflictions to warn mankind, so as to make them shun the greater evils by repentance. This, Monsieur Dacier, in his notes on Aristotle's Art of Poetry, calls a remark perfectly fine, and agreeable to God's method of sending plagues on the Egyptians, where first horses, asses, &c were smitten, and afterwards the men themselves.

V. 74. *Thetis' godlike son convenes a council.*] On the tenth day a council is held to inquire why the gods were angry? Plutarch observes, how justly he applies the characters of his persons to the incidents; not making Agamemnon but Achilles call this council, who of all the kings was most capable of making observations upon the plague, and of foreseeing its duration, as having been bred by Chiron to the study of physic. One may mention also a remark of Eustathius in pursuance to this, that Juno's advising him in this case might allude to his knowledge of an evil temperament in the air, of which she was goddess.

V. 79. *Why leave we not the fatal Trojan shore, &c.*] The artifice of this speech (according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in his second discourse, περὶ σχηματισμένων) is admirably carried on to

open an accusation against Agamemnon, whom Achilles suspects to be the cause of all their miseries. He directs himself not to the assembly, but to Agamemnon; he names not only the plague but the war too, as having exhausted them all, which was evidently due to his family. He leads the augurs he would consult, by pointing at something lately done with respect to Apollo. And while he continues within the guard of civil expression, scattering his insinuations, he encourages those who may have more knowledge to speak out boldly, by letting them see there is a party made for their safety; which has its effect immediately in the following speech of Chalcas, whose demand of protection shows upon whom the offence is to be placed.

V. 86. *By mystic dreams.*] It does not seem that by the word ονειροπολος an interpreter of dreams is meant, for we have no hint of any preceding dream which wants to be interpreted. We may therefore more probably refer it to such who used (after performing proper rites) to lie down at some sacred place and expect a dream from the gods upon any particular subject which they desired. That this was a practice among them, appears from the temples of Amphiaraus in Bœotia, and Podalirius in Apulia, where the inquirer was obliged to sleep at the altar upon the skin of the beast he had sacrificed, in order to obtain an answer.

V. 97. *Belov'd of Jove, Achilles!*] These appellations of praise and honour, with which the heroes in Homer so frequently salute each other, were agreeable to the style of the ancient times, as appears from several of the like nature in the scripture.

V. 117. *The blameless.*] The epithet αμυμων, or 'blameless,' is frequent in Homer; but not always used with so much propriety as here. The reader may observe that care has not been wanting through this translation to preserve those epithets which are peculiar to the author, whenever they receive any beauty from the circumstances about them; as this of 'blameless' manifestly does in the present passage. It is not only applied to a priest, but to one who being conscious of the truth, prepares with an honest boldness to discover it.

V. 131. *Augur accurst!*] This expression is not merely thrown out by chance, but proves what Chalcas said of the king when he asked protection, 'That he harboured anger in his heart.' For it

aims at the prediction Chalcas had given at Aulis nine years before, for the sacrificing his daughter Iphigenia. SPONDANUS.

V. 155. *Insatiate king.*] Here, where the passion of anger grows loud, it seems proper to prepare the reader, and prevent his mistake in the character of Achilles, which might shock him in several particulars following. We should know that the poet rather studied nature than perfection, in the laying down his characters. He resolved to sing the consequences of anger; he considered what virtues and vices would conduce most to bring his moral out of the fable; and artfully disposed them in his chief persons after the manner in which we generally find them; making the fault which most peculiarly attends any good quality to reside with it. Thus he has placed pride with magnanimity in Agamemnon, and craft with prudence in Ulysses. And thus we must take his Achilles, not as a mere heroic dispassioned character, but as compounded of courage and anger; one who finds himself almost invincible, and assumes an uncontrolled carriage upon the self-consciousness of his worth; whose high strain of honour will not suffer him to betray his friends, or fight against them, even when he thinks they have affronted him; but whose inexorable resentment will not let him hearken to any terms of accommodation. These are the lights and shades of his character, which Homer has heightened and darkened in extremes; because on the one side valour is the darling quality of epic poetry; and on the other, anger the particular subject of this poem. When characters thus mixed are well conducted, though they be not morally beautiful quite through, they conduce more to the end, and are still poetically perfect.

V. 169. *Great as thou art, and like a god in fight.*] The words in the original are Θεοεικελ' Αχιλλευ. Ulysses is soon after called Διος, and others in other places. The phrase of 'divine,' or 'god-like,' is not used by the poet to signify perfection in men, but applied to considerable persons upon account of some particular qualification or advantage which they were possessed of far above the common standard of mankind. Thus it is ascribed to Achilles on account of his great valour, to Ulysses for his pre-eminence in wisdom; even to Paris for his exceeding beauty, and to Clytæmnestra for several fair endowments.

V. 229. *Kings, the gods' distinguish'd care.*] In the original it is

Διοτρεφεις, or 'nurst by Jove.' Homer often uses to call his kings by such epithets as Διογενεις, 'born of the gods,' or Διοτρεφεις, 'bred by the gods;' by which he points out to themselves the offices they were ordained for, and to their people the reverence that should be paid them. These expressions are perfectly in the exalted style of the eastern nations, and correspondent to those places of holy scripture where they are called 'gods,' and 'the sons of the most High.'

V. 298. *Thou dog in forehead.*] It has been one of the objections against the manners of Homer's heroes, that they are abusive. Mons. de la Motte affirms, in his discourse upon the Iliad, that great men differ from the vulgar in their manner of expressing their passion; but certainly in violent passions (such as those of Achilles and Agamemnon) the great are as subject as any others to these sallies; of which we have frequent examples both from history and experience. Plutarch, taking notice of this line, gives it as a particular commendation of Homer, that 'he constantly affords us a fine lecture of morality in his reprehensions and praises, by referring them not to the goods of fortune or the body, but those of the mind, which are in our power, and for which we are blameable or praiseworthy. Thus, says he, Agamemnon is reproached for impudence and fear; Ajax for vain bragging; Idomeneus for the love of contention; and Ulysses does not reprove even Thersites but as a babbler, though he had so many personal deformities to object to him. In like manner also the appellations and epithets with which they accost one another are generally founded on some distinguishing qualification of merit; as 'wise Ulysses, Hector equal to Jove in wisdom, Achilles chief glory of the Greeks,' and the like. PLUTARCH of reading Poets.

Ver. 299. *In ambush'd fights to dare.*] Homer has magnified the ambush as the boldest manner of fight. They went upon those parties with a few men only, and generally the most daring of the army, on occasions of the greatest hazard, where they were therefore more exposed than in a regular battle. Thus Idomeneus, in the thirteenth book, expressly tells Meriones, that the greatest courage appears in this way of service; each man being in a manner singled out to the proof of it. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 333. *Two generations.*] The commentators make not Nestor to have lived three hundred years (according to Ovid's opinion):

they take the word γενεὰ not to signify a century or age of the world; but a generation, or compass of time in which one set of men flourish, which in the common computation is thirty years; and accordingly is here translated as much the more probable.

From what Nestor says in this speech, Madam Dacier computes the age he was of at the end of the Trojan war. The fight of the Lapithæ and Centaurs fell out fifty-five or fifty-six years before the war of Troy: the quarrel of Agamemnon and Achilles happened in the tenth and last year of that war. It was then sixty-five or sixty-six years since Nestor fought against the centaurs; he was capable at that time of giving counsel; so that one cannot imagine him to have been under twenty: from whence it will appear that he was now almost arrived to the conclusion of his third age, and about fourscore and five, or fourscore and six years of age.

V. 394. ..... *No more Achilles draws*
His conqu'ring sword in any woman's cause.]

When Achilles promises not to contest for Briseïs, he expresses it in a sharp despising air, 'I will not fight for the sake of a woman;' by which he glances at Helena, and casts an oblique reflection upon those commanders whom he is about to leave at the siege for her cause. One may observe how well it is fancied of the poet, to make one woman the ground of a quarrel which breaks an alliance that was only formed upon account of another: and how much the circumstance thus considered contributes to keep up the anger of Achilles, for carrying on the poem beyond this dissolution of the council. For (as he himself argues with Ulysses in the ixth Iliad) it is as reasonable for him to retain his anger upon the account of Briseïs, as for the brothers, with all Greece, to carry on a war upon the score of Helena. I do not know that any commentator has taken notice of this sarcasm of Achilles, which I think a very obvious one.

V. 430. *At awful distance silent.*] There was required a very remarkable management to preserve all the characters which are concerned in this nice conjuncture, wherein the heralds were to obey at their peril; Agamemnon was to be gratified by an insult on Achilles; and Achilles was to suffer so as might become his pride, and not have his violent temper provoked. From all this the poet has

has found the secret to extricate himself, by only taking care to make his heralds stand in sight, and silent.

V. 451. *She, in soft sorrows.*] The behaviour of Briseïs in her departure is no less beautifully imagined than the former. A French or Italian poet had lavished all his wit and passion in two long speeches on this occasion, which the heralds must have wept to hear; instead of which, Homer gives us a fine picture of nature. We see Briseïs passing unwillingly along, with a dejected air, melted in tenderness, and not able to utter a word: and in the lines immediately following, we have a contrast to this in the gloomy resentment of Achilles, who suddenly retires to the shore and vents his rage aloud to the seas. The variation of the numbers just in this place adds a great beauty to it, which has been endeavoured at in the translation.

V. 458. *There, bath'd in tears.*] Eustathius observes on this place that it is no weakness in heroes to weep, but the very effect of humanity, and a proof of a generous temper; for which he offers several instances, and takes notice, that if Sophocles would not let Ajax weep, it is because he is drawn rather as a madman than an hero. But this general observation is not all we can offer in excuse for the tears of Achilles: his are tears of anger and disdain (as I have ventured to call them in the translation), of which a great and fiery temper is more susceptible than any other; and even in this case Homer has taken care to preserve the high character, by making him retire to vent his tears out of sight.

V. 464. *The thund'rer ow'd.*] This alludes to a story which Achilles tells the ambassadors of Agamemnon, Il. ix. that he had the choice of two fates: one less glorious at home, but blessed with a very long life; the other full of glory at Troy, but then he was never to return. The alternative being thus proposed to him (not from Jupiter, but Thetis, who revealed the decree), he chose the latter, which he looks upon as his due, since he gives away length of life for it: and accordingly when he complains to his mother of the disgrace he lies under, it is in this manner he makes a demand of honour.

Mons. de la Motte very judiciously observes, that but for this foreknowledge of the certainty of his death at Troy, Achilles's character could have drawn but little esteem from the reader. A hero

of a vicious mind, blest only with a superiority of strength, and invulnerable into the bargain, was not very proper to excite admiration; but Homer, by this exquisite piece of art, has made him the greatest of heroes, who is still pursuing glory in contempt of death, and even under that certainty generously devoting himself in every action.

V. 478. *From Thebè.*] Homer, who opened his poem with the action which immediately brought on Achilles's anger, being now to give an account of the same thing again, takes his rise more backward in the story. Thus the reader is informed in what he should know, without having been delayed from entering upon the promised subject. This is the first attempt which we see made towards the poetical method of narration, which differs from the historical, in that it does not proceed always directly in the line of time, but sometimes relates things which have gone before, when a more proper opportunity demands it, to make the narration more informing or beautiful.

The foregoing remark is in regard only to the first six lines of this speech. What follows is a rehearsal of the preceding action of the poem, almost in the same words he had used in the opening it; and is one of those faults which has with most justice been objected to our author.

V. 523. *Whom gods Briareus, m.n Ægeon name.*] This manner of making the gods speak a language different from men (which is frequent in Homer) is a circumstance that, as far as it widens the distinction between divine and human natures, so far might tend to heighten the reverence paid the gods. But besides this, as the difference is thus told in poetry, it is of use to the poets themselves: for it appears like a kind of testimony of their inspiration, or their converse with the gods, and thereby gives a majesty to their works.

V. 557. *The feast of Æthiopia's blameless race.*] The Æthiopians, says Diodorus, l. 3, are said to be the inventors of pomps, sacrifices, solemn meetings, and other honours paid to the gods. From hence arose their character of piety, which is here celebrated by Homer. Among these there was an annual feast at Diospolis, which Eustathius mentions, wherein they carried about the statues of Jupiter and the other gods, for twelve days, according to their number: to which if we add the ancient custom of setting meat be-

fore statues, it will appear a rite from which this fable might easily arise. But it would be a great mistake to imagine from this place, that Homer represents the gods as eating and drinking upon earth: a gross notion he was never guilty of, as appears from these verses in the fifth book, v. 340.

Ιχωρ οἱος περ τε ῥεει μακαρεσσι θεοισιν;
Ου γαρ σιτον εδουσ' ου πινουσ' αιθοπα οινον,
Τυνεκ' αναιμονες εισι, και αθανατοι καλεονται.

('For not the bread of man their life sustains,
Nor wine's inflaming juice supplies their veins.')

V. 600. *The sacrifice.*] If we consider this passage, it is not made to shine in poetry: all that can be done is to give it numbers, and endeavour to set the particulars in a distinct view. But if we take it in another light, and as a piece of learning, it is valuable for being the most exact account of the ancient sacrifices any where left us. There is first the purification, by washing of hands: secondly the offering up of prayers: thirdly the Mola, or barley-cake thrown upon the victim: fourthly the manner of killing it with the head turned upwards to the celestial gods (as they turned it downwards when they offered to the infernals): fifthly their selecting the thighs and fat for their gods as the best of the sacrifice, and the disposing about them pieces cut from every part for a representation of the whole (hence the thighs, or μηρια, are frequently used in Homer and the Greek poets for the whole victim): sixthly the libation of wine: seventhly consuming the thighs in the fire of the altar: eighthly the sacrificers dressing and feasting on the rest, with joy and hymns to the gods. Thus punctually have the ancient poets, and in particular Homer, written with a care and respect to religion. One may question whether any country, as much a stranger to christianity as we are to heathenism, might be so well informed by our poets in the worship belonging to any profession of religion at present.

V. 683. *He spoke, and awful bends.*] This description of the majesty of Jupiter has something exceedingly grand and venerable. Macrobius reports, that Phidias having made his Olympian Jupiter, which passed for one of the greatest miracles of art, was asked from what pattern he framed so divine a figure, and answered, it was from that archetype which he found in these lines of Homer.

V. 694. *Jove assumes the throne.*] As Homer makes the first council of his men to be one continued scene of anger, whereby the Grecian chiefs become divided, so he makes the first meeting of the gods to be spent in the same passion; whereby Jupiter is more fixed to assist the Trojans, and Juno more incensed against them. Thus the design of the poem goes on: the anger which began the book overspreads all existent beings by the latter end of it: heaven and earth become engaged in the subject, by which it rises to a great importance in the reader's eyes, and is hastened forward into the briskest scenes of action that can be framed upon that violent passion.

V. 713. *Roll'd the large orbs.*] The Greek is Βοωπις ποτνια Ἡρη, which is commonly translated the 'venerable ox-ey'd Juno.' Madam Dacier very well observes that βο is only an augmentative particle, and signifies no more than 'valdè.' It may be added, that the imagination that oxen have larger eyes than ordinary is ill-grounded, and has no foundation in truth; their eyes are no larger in proportion than those of men, or of most other animals. But be it as it will, the design of the poet, which is only to express the largeness of her eyes, is answered in the paraphrase.

V. 767. *Which, with a smile, the white-arm'd queen receiv'd.*] The epithet λευκωλενος, or 'white-arm'd,' is used by Homer several times before in this book. This was the first passage where it could be introduced with any ease or grace; because the action she is here described in, of extending her arm to the cup, gives it an occasion of displaying its beauties, and in a manner demands the epithet.

V. 778. *Then to their starry domes.*] The astrologers assign twelve houses to the planets, wherein they are said to have dominion. Now because Homer tells us Vulcan built a mansion for every god, the ancients write that he first gave occasion for this doctrine.

V. 780. *Jove on his couch reclin'd his awful head.*] Eustathius makes a distinction between καθευδειν and ὑπνωειν; the words which are used at the end of this book, and the beginning of the next, with regard to Jupiter's sleeping. He says καθευδειν only means lying down in a disposition to sleep; which salves the contradiction that else would follow in the next book, where it is said Jupiter did not sleep. I only mention this to vindicate the translation, which dif-

THE

SECOND BOOK

OF THE

ILIAD.

VOL. I.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE TRIAL OF THE ARMY AND CATALOGUE OF THE FORCES.

JUPITER, in pursuance of the request of Thetis, sends a deceitful vision to Agamemnon, persuading him to lead the army to battle, in order to make the Greeks sensible of their want of Achilles. The general, who is deluded with the hopes of taking Troy without his assistance, but fears the army was discouraged by his absence, and the late plague, as well as by the length of time, contrives to make trial of their disposition by a stratagem. He first communicates his design to the princes in council, that he would propose a return to the soldiers, and that they should put a stop to them if the proposal was embraced. Then he assembles the whole host, and upon moving for a return to Greece, they unanimously agree to it, and run to prepare the ships. They are detained by the management of Ulysses, who chastises the insolence of Thersites. The assembly is recalled, several speeches made on the occasion, and at length the advice of Nestor followed, which was to make a general muster of the troops, and to divide them into their several nations, before they proceeded to battle. This gives occasion to the poet to enumerate all the forces of the Greeks and Trojans, and in a large catalogue.

The time employed in this book consists not entirely of one day. The scene lies in the Grecian camp, and upon the seashore; toward the end it removes to Troy.

Painted by Hr Fuseli R.A. *Engraved by Jas Heath A.*

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BOOK II.

Now pleasing sleep had seal'd each mortal eye,
Stretch'd in the tents the Grecian leaders lie:
Th' immortals slumber'd on their thrones above;
All, but the ever-wakeful eyes of Jove.
To honour Thetis' son he bends his care,
And plunge the Greeks in all the woes of war:
Then bids an empty phantom rise to sight,
And thus commands the vision of the night.

Fly hence, deluding dream! and light as air,
To Agamemnon's ample tent repair.
Bid him in arms draw forth th' embattled train,
Lead all his Grecians to the dusty plain.
Declare, e'en now 'tis giv'n him to destroy
The lofty tow'rs of wide-extended Troy.
For now no more the gods with fate contend,
At Juno's suit the heav'nly factions end.
Destruction hangs o'er yon devoted wall,
And nodding Ilion waits th' impending fall.

Swift as the word the vain illusion fled,
Descends, and hovers o'er Atrides' head;

Cloth'd in the figure of the Pylian sage,
Renown'd for wisdom, and rever'd for age;
Around his temples spreads his golden wing,
And thus the flatt'ring dream deceives the king.
Canst thou, with all a monarch's cares opprest,
O Atreus' son! canst thou indulge thy rest?
Ill fits a chief who mighty nations guides,
Directs in council, and in war presides,
To whom its safety a whole people owes,
To waste long nights in indolent repose.
Monarch, awake! 'tis Jove's command I bear,
Thou, and thy glory, claim his heav'nly care.
In just array draw forth th' embattled train,
Lead all thy Grecians to the dusty plain;
E'en now, O king! 'tis giv'n thee to destroy
The lofty tow'rs of wide-extended Troy.
For now no more the gods with fate contend,
At Juno's suit the heav'nly factions end.
Destruction hangs o'er yon devoted wall,
And nodding Ilion waits th' impending fall.
Awake, but waking this advice approve,
And trust the vision that descends from Jove.
The phantom said; then vanish'd from his sight,
Resolves to air, and mixes with the night.

A thousand schemes the monarch's mind employ;
Elate in thought, he sacks untaken Troy:
Vain as he was, and to the future blind;
Nor saw what Jove and secret fate design'd,
What mighty toils to either host remain,
What scenes of grief, and numbers of the slain!
Eager he rises, and in fancy hears
The voice celestial murm'ring in his ears.
First on his limbs a slender vest he drew,
Around him next the regal mantle threw,
Th' embroider'd sandals on his feet were ty'd;
The starry faulchion glitter'd at his side;
And last his arm the massy sceptre loads,
Unstain'd, immortal, and the gift of gods.

Now rosy morn ascends the court of Jove,
Lifts up her light, and opens day above.
The king dispatch'd his heralds with commands
To range the camp and summon all the bands:
The gath'ring hosts the monarch's word obey;
While to the fleet Atrides bends his way.
In his black ship the Pylian prince he found;
There calls a senate of the peers around:
Th' assembly plac'd, the king of men expest
The counsels lab'ring in his artful breast.

Friends and confed'rates! with attentive ear
Receive my words, and credit what you hear.
Late as I slumber'd in the shades of night,
A dream divine appear'd before my sight;
Whose visionary form like Nestor came,
The same in habit, and in mien the same.
The heav'nly phantom hover'd o'er my head,
And, dost thou sleep, O Atreus' son? (he said)
Ill fits a chief who mighty nations guides,
Directs in council, and in war presides,
To whom its safety a whole people owes,
To waste long nights in indolent repose.
Monarch, awake! 'tis Jove's command I bear,
Thou and thy glory claim his heav'nly care.
In just array draw forth th' embattled train,
And lead the Grecians to the dusty plain;
E'en now, O king! 'tis giv'n thee to destroy
The lofty tow'rs of wide-extended Troy.
For now no more the gods with fate contend,
At Juno's suit the heav'nly factions end.
Destruction hangs o'er yon devoted wall,
And nodding Ilion waits th' impending fall.
This hear observant, and the gods obey!
The vision spoke, and pass'd in air away.

Now, valiant chiefs! since heav'n itself alarms,
Unite, and rouse the sons of Greece to arms.
But first, with caution, try what yet they dare,
Worn with nine years of unsuccessful war.
To move the troops to measure back the main,
Be mine; and yours the province to detain.

He spoke, and sat: when Nestor, rising, said,
(Nestor, whom Pylos' sandy realms obey'd)
Princes of Greece, your faithful ears incline,
Nor doubt the vision of the pow'rs divine;
Sent by great Jove to him who rules the host,
Forbid it, heav'n! this warning should be lost!
Then let us haste, obey the god's alarms,
And join to rouse the sons of Greece to arms.

Thus spoke the sage: the kings without delay
Dissolve the council, and their chief obey:
The sceptred rulers lead; the following host,
Pour'd forth by thousands, darkens all the coast.
As from some rocky cleft the shepherd sees
Clust'ring in heaps on heaps the driving bees,
Rolling and black'ning, swarms succeeding swarms,
With deeper murmurs and more hoarse alarms;
Dusky they spread, a close-embody'd crowd,
And o'er the vale descends the living cloud.

So, from the tents and ships, a length'ning train
Spreads all the beach, and wide o'ershades the plain:
Along the region runs a deaf'ning sound;
Beneath their footsteps groans the trembling ground.
Fame flies before, the messenger of Jove,
And shining soars, and claps her wings above.
Nine sacred heralds now, proclaiming loud
The monarch's will, suspend the list'ning crowd.
Soon as the throngs in order rang'd appear,
And fainter murmurs died upon the ear,
The king of kings his awful figure rais'd:
High in his hand the golden sceptre blaz'd;
The golden sceptre, of celestial frame,
By Vulcan form'd, from Jove to Hermes came:
To Pelops he th' immortal gift resign'd;
Th' immortal gift great Pelops left behind,
In Atreus' hand, which not with Atreus ends,
To rich Thyestes next the prize descends;
And now the mark of Agamemnon's reign,
Subjects all Argos, and controuls the main.

On this bright sceptre now the king reclin'd,
And artful thus pronounc'd the speech design'd:
Ye sons of Mars! partake your leader's care,
Heroes of Greece, and brothers of the war!

Of partial Jove with justice I complain,
And heav'nly oracles believ'd in vain.
A safe return was promis'd to our toils,
Renown'd, triumphant, and enrich'd with spoils.
Now shameful flight alone can save the host,
Our blood, our treasure, and our glory lost.
So Jove decrees, resistless lord of all!
At whose command whole empires rise or fall:
He shakes the feeble props of human trust,
And towns and armies humbles to the dust.
What shame to Greece a fruitless war to wage,
Oh lasting shame in ev'ry future age!
Once great in arms, the common scorn we grow,
Repuls'd and baffled by a feeble foe.
So small their number, that if wars were ceas'd,
And Greece triumphant held a gen'ral feast,
All rank'd by tens, whole decades when they dine
Must want a Trojan slave to pour the wine.
But other forces have our hopes o'erthrown,
And Troy prevails by armies not her own.
Now nine long years of mighty Jove are run
Since first the labours of this war begun:
Our cordage torn, decay'd our vessels lie,
And scarce ensure the wretched pow'r to fly.

Haste then, for ever leave the Trojan wall!
Our weeping wives, our tender children call:
Love, duty, safety, summon us away,
'Tis nature's voice, and nature we obey.
Our shatter'd barks may yet transport us o'er,
Safe and inglorious, to our native shore.
Fly, Grecians, fly, your sails and oars employ,
And dream no more of heav'n-defended Troy.

His deep design unknown, the hosts approve
Atrides' speech. The mighty numbers move.
So roll the billows to th' Icarian shore,
From east and south when winds begin to roar,
Burst their dark mansions in the clouds, and sweep
The whit'ning surface of the ruffled deep.
And as on corn when western gusts descend,
Before the blast the lofty harvests bend:
Thus o'er the field the moving host appears,
With nodding plumes and groves of waving spears.
The gath'ring murmur spreads, their trampling feet
Beat the loose sands, and thicken to the fleet.
With long-resounding cries they urge the train
To fit the ships, and launch into the main.
They toil, they sweat, thick clouds of dust arise,
The doubling clamours echo to the skies.

E'en then the Greeks had left the hostile plain,
And fate decreed the fall of Troy in vain;
But Jove's imperial queen their flight survey'd,
And sighing thus bespoke the blue-ey'd maid.
Shall then the Grecians fly! Oh dire disgrace!
And leave unpunish'd this perfidious race?
Shall Troy, shall Priam, and th' adult'rous spouse,
In peace enjoy the fruits of broken vows?
And bravest chiefs, in Helen's quarrel slain,
Lie unrèveng'd on yon detested plain?
No: let my Greeks, unmov'd by vain alarms,
Once more refulgent shine in brazen arms.
Haste, goddess, haste! the flying host detain,
Nor let one sail be hoisted on the main.
Pallas obeys, and from Olympus' height
Swift to the ships precipitates her flight;
Ulysses, first in public cares, she found,
For prudent counsel like the gods renown'd:
Oppress'd with gen'rous grief the hero stood,
Nor drew his sable vessels to the flood.
And is it thus, divine Laërtes' son!
Thus fly the Greeks (the martial maid begun),
Thus to their country bear their own disgrace,
And fame eternal leave to Priam's race?

Shall beauteous Helen still remain unfreed,
Still unreveng'd, a thousand heroes bleed?
Haste, gen'rous Ithacus! prevent the shame,
Recall your armies, and your chiefs reclaim.
Your own resistless eloquence employ,
And to th' immortals trust the fall of Troy.
The voice divine confess'd the warlike maid,
Ulysses heard, nor uninspir'd obey'd:
Then meeting first Atrides, from his hand
Receiv'd th' imperial sceptre of command.
Thus grac'd, attention and respect to gain,
He runs, he flies through all the Grecian train;
Each prince of name, or chief in arms approv'd,
He fir'd with praise, or with persuasion mov'd.
Warriors like you, with strength and wisdom blest,
By brave examples should confirm the rest.
The monarch's will not yet reveal'd appears;
He tries our courage, but resents our fears.
Th' unwary Greeks his fury may provoke;
Not thus the king in secret council spoke.
Jove loves our chief, from Jove his honour springs,
Beware! for dreadful is the wrath of kings.
But if a clam'rous vile plebeian rose,
Him with reproof he check'd, or tam'd with blows.

Be still, thou slave, and to thy betters yield;
Unknown alike in council and in field!
Ye gods, what dastards would our host command?
Swept to the war, the lumber of a land.
Be silent, wretch, and think not here allow'd
That worst of tyrants, an usurping crowd.
To one sole monarch Jove commits the sway;
His are the laws, and him let all obey.

With words like these the troops Ulysses rul'd,
The loudest silenc'd, and the fiercest cool'd.
Back to th' assembly roll the thronging train,
Desert the ships, and pour upon the plain.
Murm'ring they move, as when old ocean roars,
And heaves huge surges to the trembling shores:
The groaning banks are burst with bellowing sound,
The rocks remurmur, and the deeps rebound.
At length the tumult sinks, the noises cease,
And a still silence lulls the camp to peace.
Thersites only clamour'd in the throng,
Loquacious, loud, and turbulent of tongue:
Aw'd by no shame, by no respect controul'd,
In scandal busy, in reproaches bold:
With witty malice studious to defame;
Scorn all his joy, and laughter all his aim.

But chief he glory'd with licentious style
To lash the great, and monarchs to revile.
His figure such as might his soul proclaim;
One eye was blinking, and one leg was lame:
His mountain-shoulders half his breast o'erspread,
Thin hairs bestrew'd his long misshapen head.
Spleen to mankind his envious heart possest,
And much he hated all, but most the best.
Ulysses or Achilles still his theme;
But royal scandal his delight supreme.
Long had he liv'd the scorn of ev'ry Greek,
Vex'd when he spoke, yet still they heard him speak.
Sharp was his voice; which in the shrillest tone,
Thus with injurious taunts attack'd the throne.
Amidst the glories of so bright a reign,
What moves the great Atrides to complain?
'Tis thine whate'er the warrior's breast inflames,
The golden spoil, and thine the lovely dames.
With all the wealth our wars and blood bestow,
Thy tents are crowded, and thy chests o'erflow.
Thus at full ease in heaps of riches roll'd,
What grieves the monarch? Is it thirst of gold?
Say, shall we march with our unconquer'd pow'rs
(The Greeks and I) to Ilion's hostile tow'rs,

And bring the race of royal bastards here,
For Troy to ransom at a price too dear?
But safer plunder thy own host supplies;
Say, wouldst thou seize some valiant leader's prize?
Or, if thy heart to gen'rous love be led,
Some captive fair, to bless thy kingly bed?
Whate'er our master craves, submit we must,
Plagu'd with his pride, or punish'd for his lust.
Oh women of Achaia! men no more!
Hence let us fly, and let him waste his store
In loves and pleasures on the Phrygian shore.
We may be wanted on some busy day,
When Hector comes: so great Achilles may:
From him he forc'd the prize we jointly gave,
From him, the fierce, the fearless, and the brave:
And durst he, as he ought, resent that wrong,
This mighty tyrant were no tyrant long.
Fierce from his seat at this Ulysses springs,
In gen'rous vengeance of the king of kings.
With indignation sparkling in his eyes,
He views the wretch, and sternly thus replies.
Peace, factious monster, born to vex the state,
With wrangling talents form'd for foul debate:
Curb that impetuous tongue, nor rashly vain,
And singly mad, asperse the sov'reign reign.

Have we not known thee, slave! of all our host,
The man who acts the least, upbraids the most?
Think not the Greeks to shameful flight to bring,
Nor let those lips profane the name of king.
For our return we trust the heav'nly pow'rs;
Be that their care; to fight like men be ours.
But grant the host with wealth the gen'ral load,
Except detraction, what hast thou bestow'd?
Suppose some hero should his spoils resign,
Art thou that hero, could those spoils be thine?
Gods! let me perish on this hateful shore,
And let these eyes behold my son no more;
If, on thy next offence, this hand forbear
To strip those arms thou ill deserv'st to wear,
Expel the council where our princes meet,
And send thee scourg'd, and howling through the fleet.

He said, and cow'ring as the dastard bends,
The weighty sceptre on his back descends:
On the round bunch the bloody tumours rise;
The tears spring starting from his haggard eyes:
Trembling he sat, and shrunk in abject fears,
From his vile visage wip'd the scalding tears.
While to his neighbour each express'd his thought:
Ye gods! what wonders has Ulysses wrought?

What fruits his conduct and his courage yield?
Great in the council, glorious in the field.
Gen'rous he rises in the crown's defence,
To curb the factious tongue of insolence.
Such just examples on offenders shown,
Sedition silence, and assert the throne.

'Twas thus the gen'ral voice the hero prais'd,
Who, rising, high th' imperial sceptre rais'd:
The blue-ey'd Pallas, his celestial friend,
(In form a herald) bade the crowds attend.
Th' expecting crowds in still attention hung,
To hear the wisdom of his heav'nly tongue.
Then deeply thoughtful, pausing ere he spoke,
His silence thus the prudent hero broke.

Unhappy monarch! whom the Grecian race
With shame deserting, heap with vile disgrace.
Not such at Argos was their gen'rous vow:
Once all their voice, but ah! forgotten now:
Ne'er to return, was then the common cry,
'Till Troy's proud structures should in ashes lie.
Behold them weeping for their native shore!
What could their wives or helpless children more?
What heart but melts to leave the tender train,
And, one short month, endure the wintry main?

Few leagues remov'd, we wish our peaceful seat,
When the ship tosses, and the tempests beat:
Then well may this long stay provoke their tears,
The tedious length of nine revolving years.
Not for their grief the Grecian host I blame;
But vanquish'd! baffled! oh eternal shame!
'Expect the time to Troy's destruction giv'n,
And try the faith of Chalcas and of heav'n.
What pass'd at Aulis, Greece can witness bear,
And all who live to breathe this Phrygian air.
Beside a fountain's sacred brink we rais'd
Our verdant altars, and the victims blaz'd:
('Twas where the plane-tree spread its shades around)
The altars heav'd; and from the crumbling ground
A mighty dragon shot, of dire portent;
From Jove himself the dreadful sign was sent.
Straight to the tree his sanguine spires he roll'd,
And curl'd around in many a winding fold.
The topmost branch a mother-bird possest;
Eight callow infants fill'd the mossy nest;
Herself the ninth: the serpent, as he hung,
Stretch'd his black jaws, and crash'd the crying young;
While hov'ring near, with miserable moan,

The mother last, as round the nest she flew,
Seiz'd by the beating wing, the monster slew:
Nor long surviv'd; to marble turn'd he stands
A lasting prodigy on Aulis' sands.
Such was the will of Jove; and hence we dare
Trust in his omen, and support the war.
For while around we gaz'd with wond'ring eyes,
And trembling sought the pow'rs with sacrifice,
Full of his god, the rev'rend Chalcas cry'd,
Ye Grecian warriors! lay your fears aside.
This wond'rous signal Jove himself displays,
Of long, long labours, but eternal praise.
As many birds as by the snake were slain,
So many years the toils of Greece remain;
But wait the tenth, for Ilion's fall decreed:
Thus spoke the prophet, thus the fates succeed.
Obey; ye Grecians! with submission wait,
Nor let your flight avert the Trojan fate.

He said: the shores with loud applauses sound,
The hollow ships each deaf'ning shout rebound.
Then Nestor thus—These vain debates forbear,
Ye talk like children, not like heroes dare.
Where now are all your high resolves at last?
Your leagues concluded, your engagements past?

Vow'd with libations and with victims then,
Now vanish'd like their smoke: the faith of men!
While useless words consume th' unactive hours,
No wonder Troy so long resists our pow'rs.
Rise, great Atrides! and with courage sway;
We march to war, if thou direct the way.
But leave the few that dare resist thy laws,
The mean deserters of the Grecian cause,
To grudge the conquests mighty Jove prepares,
And view with envy our succesful wars.
On that great day when first the martial train,
Big with the fate of Ilion, plough'd the main,
Jove, on the right, a prosp'rous signal sent,
And thunder rolling shook the firmament.
Encourag'd hence, maintain the glorious strife,
Till ev'ry soldier grasp a Phrygian wife,
Till Helen's woes at full reveng'd appear,
And Troy's proud matrons render tear for tear.
Before that day, if any Greek invite
His country's troops to base inglorious flight,
Stand forth that Greek! and hoist his sail to fly,
And die the dastard first, who dreads to die.
But now, O monarch! all thy chiefs advise:
Nor what they offer, thou thyself despise

Among those counsels, let not mine be vain;
In tribes and nations to divide thy train:
His sep'rate troops let ev'ry leader call,
Each strengthen each, and all encourage all.
What chief, or soldier, of the num'rous band,
Or bravely fights, or ill obeys command,
When thus distinct they war, shall soon be known,
And what the cause of Ilion not o'erthrown;
If fate resists, or if our arms are slow,
If gods above prevent, or men below.

To him the king: How much thy years excel
In arts of counsel, and in speaking well!
O would the gods, in love to Greece, decree
But ten such sages as they grant in thee;
Such wisdom soon should Priam's force destroy,
And soon should fall the haughty tow'rs of Troy!
But Jove forbids, who plunges those he hates
In fierce contention and in vain debates;
Now great Achilles from our aid withdraws,
By me provok'd; a captive maid the cause:
If e'er as friends we join, the Trojan wall
Must shake, and heavy will the vengeance fall!
But now, ye warriors, take a short repast;

His sharpen'd spear let ev'ry Grecian wield,
And ev'ry Grecian fix his brazen shield,
Let all excite the fiery steeds of war,
And all for combat fit the rattling car.
This day, this dreadful day, let each contend;
No rest, no respite, till the shades descend;
Till darkness, or till death, shall cover all:
Let the war bleed, and let the mighty fall!
Till bath'd in sweat be ev'ry manly breast,
With the huge shield each brawny arm deprest,
Each aching nerve refuse the lance to throw,
And each spent courser at the chariot blow.
Who dares, inglorious, in his ships to stay,
Who dares to tremble on this signal day;
That wretch, too mean to fall by martial pow'r,
The birds shall mangle, and the dogs devour.

The monarch spoke; and straight a murmur rose,
Loud as the surges when the tempest blows,
That dash'd on broken rocks tumultuous roar,
And foam and thunder on the stony shore.
Straight to the tents the troops dispersing bend,
The fires are kindled, and the smokes ascend;
With hasty feasts they sacrifice, and pray
T' avert the dangers of the doubtful day.

A steer of five years' age, large limb'd, and fed,
To Jove's high altars Agamemnon led:
There bade the noblest of the Grecian peers;
And Nestor first, as most advanc'd in years.
Next came Idomeneus, and Tideus' son,
Ajax the less, and Ajax Telamon;
Then wise Ulysses in his rank was plac'd;
And Menelaüs came, unbid, the last.
The chiefs surround the destin'd beast, and take
The sacred off'ring of the salted cake:
When thus the king prefers his solemn pray'r,
O thou! whose thunder rends the clouded air,
Who in the heav'n of heav'ns hast fix'd thy throne,
Supreme of gods! unbounded, and alone!
Hear! and before the burning sun descends,
Before the night her gloomy veil extends,
Low in the dust be laid yon hostile spires,
Be Priam's palace sunk in Grecian fires,
In Hector's breast be plung'd this shining sword,
And slaughter'd heroes groan around their lord!
Thus pray'd the chief: his unavailing pray'r
Great Jove refus'd, and toss'd in empty air:
The god averse, while yet the fumes arose,
Prepar'd new toils, and doubled woes on woes.

Their pray'rs perform'd, the chiefs the rite pursue,
The barley sprinkled, and the victim slew.
The limbs they sever from th' inclosing hide,
The thighs, selected to the gods, divide.
On these, in double cauls involv'd with art,
The choicest morsels lie from ev'ry part.
From the cleft wood the crackling flames aspire,
While the fat victims feed the sacred fire.
The thighs thus sacrific'd, and entrails drest,
Th' assistants part, transfix, and roast the rest;
Then spread the tables, the repast prepare,
Each takes his seat, and each receives his share.
Soon as the rage of hunger was supprest,
The gen'rous Nestor thus the prince addrest.

Now bid thy heralds sound the loud alarms,
And call the squadrons sheath'd in brazen arms:
Now seize th' occasion, now the troops survey,
And lead to war when heav'n directs the way.

He said; the monarch issu'd his commands;
Straight the loud heralds call the gath'ring bands.
The chiefs enclose their king; the hosts divide
In tribes and nations rank'd on either side.
High in the midst the blue-ey'd virgin flies;
From rank to rank she darts her ardent eyes:

The dreadful ægis, Jove's immortal shield,
Blaz'd on her arm, and lighten'd all the field:
Round the vast orb an hundred serpents roll'd,
Form'd the bright fringe, and seem'd to burn in gold.
With this each Grecian's manly breast she warms,
Swells their bold hearts, and strings their nervous arms;
No more they sigh, inglorious to return,
But breathe revenge, and for the combat burn.

As on some mountain, through the lofty grove,
The crackling flames ascend, and blaze above;
The fires expanding, as the winds arise,
Shoot their long beams, and kindle half the skies:
So from the polish'd arms, and brazen shields,
A gleamy splendour flash'd along the fields.
Not less their number than th' embody'd cranes,
Or milk-white swans in Asius' wat'ry plains,
That o'er the windings of Cayster's springs
Stretch their long necks, and clap their rustling wings,
Now tow'r aloft, and course in airy rounds,
Now light with noise; with noise the field resounds.
Thus num'rous and confus'd, extending wide,

With rushing troops the plains are cover'd o'er,
And thund'ring footsteps shake the sounding shore.
Along the river's level meads they stand,
Thick as in spring the flow'rs adorn the land,
Or leaves the trees; or thick as insects play,
The wand'ring nation of a summer's day;
That, drawn by milky steams, at ev'ning hours,
In gather'd swarms surround the rural bow'rs;
From pail to pail with busy murmur run
The gilded legions, glitt'ring in the sun.
So throng'd, so close, the Grecian squadrons stood
In radiant arms, and thirst for Trojan blood.
Each leader now his scatter'd force conjoins,
In close array, and forms the deep'ning lines.
Not with more ease, the skilful shepherd swain
Collects his flocks from thousands on the plain.
The king of kings, majestically tall,
Tow'rs o'er his armies, and outshines them all:
Like some proud bull, that round the pastures leads
His subject-herds, the monarch of the meads.
Great as the gods, th' exalted chief was seen,
His strength like Neptune, and like Mars his mien;
Jove o'er his eyes celestial glories spread,
And dawning conquests play'd around his head.

Say, virgins, seated round the throne divine,
All-knowing goddesses! immortal nine!
Since earth's wide regions, heav'n's unmeasur'd height,
And hell's abyss, hide nothing from your sight,
(We, wretched mortals! lost in doubts below,
But guess by rumour, and but boast we know)
O say what heroes, fir'd by thirst of fame,
Or urg'd by wrongs, to Troy's destruction came?
To count them all, demands a thousand tongues,
A throat of brass, and adamantine lungs.
Daughters of Jove, assist! inspir'd by you
The mighty labour dauntless I pursue:
What crowded armies, from what climes they bring,
Their names, their numbers, and their chiefs I sing.

THE CATALOGUE OF THE SHIPS.

The hardy warriors whom Bœotia bred,
Peneleus, Leitus, Prothoënor, led:
With these Arcesilaus and Clonius stand,
Equal in arms, and equal in command.
These head the troops that rocky Aulis yields,
And Eteon's hills, and Hyrie's wat'ry fields,

And Schœnos, Scolos, Græa near the main,
And Mycalessia's ample piny plain:
Those who in Peteon or Ilesion dwell,
Or Harma where Apollo's prophet fell;
Heleon and Hylè, which the springs o'erflow;
And Medeon lofty, and Ocalea low;
Or in the meads of Haliartus stray,
Or Thespia sacred to the god of day:
Onchestus, Neptune's celebrated groves;
Copæ, and Thisbè, fam'd for silver doves:
For flocks Erythræ, Glissa for the vine;
Platæa green, and Nisa the divine:
And they whom Thebè's well-built walls enclose,
Where Mydè, Eutresis, Coronè rose;
And Arnè rich, with purple harvests crown'd;
And Anthedon, Bœotia's utmost bound.
Full fifty ships they send, and each conveys
Twice sixty warriors through the foaming seas.
To these succeed Aspledon's martial train,
Who plough the spacious Orchomenian plain.
Two valiant brothers rule th' undaunted throng,
Ialmen and Ascalaphus the strong:
Sons of Astyochè, the heav'nly fair,
Whose virgin charms subdu'd the god of war:

(In Actor's court as she retir'd to rest,
The strength of Mars the blushing maid comprest)
Their troops in thirty sable vessels sweep,
With equal oars, the hoarse-resounding deep.
The Phocians next in forty barks repair;
Epistrophus and Schedius head the war:
From those rich regions where Cephissus leads
His silver current through the flow'ry meads;
From Panopëa, Chrysa the divine,
Where Anemoria's stately turrets shine,
Where Pytho, Daulis, Cyparissus stood,
And fair Lilæa views the rising flood.
These, rang'd in order on the floating tide,
Close, on the left, the bold Bœotians' side.
Fierce Ajax led the Locrian squadrons on,
Ajax the less, Oïleus' valiant son;
Skill'd to direct the flying dart aright;
Swift in pursuit, and active in the fight.
Him, as their chief, the chosen troops attend,
Which Bessa, Thronus, and rich Cynos send;
Opus, Calliarus, and Scarphe's bands;
And those who dwell where pleasing Augia stands,
And where Boägrius floats the lowly lands,
Or in fair Tarphe's sylvan seats reside:
In forty vessels cut the yielding tide.

Eubœa next her martial sons prepares,
And sends the brave Abantes to the wars:
Breathing revenge, in arms they take their way
From Chalcis' walls, and strong Eretria;
Th' Isteian fields for gen'rous vines renown'd,
The fair Carystos, and the Styrian ground;
Where Dios from her tow'rs o'erlooks the plain,
And high Cerinthus views the neighb'ring main.
Down their broad shoulders falls a length of hair;
Their hands dismiss not the long lance in air;
But with portended spears in fighting fields
Pierce the tough cors'lets and the brazen shields.
Twice twenty ships transport the warlike bands,
Which bold Elphenor, fierce in arms, commands.
Full fifty more from Athens stem the main,
Led by Menestheus through the liquid plain.
(Athens the fair, where great Erectheus sway'd,
That ow'd his nurture to the blue-ey'd maid,
But from the teeming furrow took his birth,
The mighty offspring of the foodful earth.
Him Pallas plac'd amidst her wealthy fane,
Ador'd with sacrifice and oxen slain;
Where, as the years revolve, her altars blaze,
And all the tribes resound the goddess' praise)

No chief, like thee, Menestheus! Greece could yield,
To marshal armies in the dusty field,
Th' extended wings of battle to display,
Or close th' embody'd host in firm array.
Nestor alone, improv'd by length of days,
For martial conduct bore an equal praise.

With these appear the Salaminian bands,
Whom the gigantic Telamon commands;
In twelve black ships to Troy they steer their course,
And with the great Athenians join their force.

Next move to war the gen'rous Argive train,
From high Trœzenè, and Maseta's plain,
And fair Ægina circled by the main:
Whom strong Tyrinthè's lofty walls surround,
And Epidaur with viny harvests crown'd:
And where fair Asinen and Hermion show
Their cliffs above, and ample bay below.
These by the brave Euryalus were led,
Great Sthenelus, and greater Diomed;
But chief Tydides bore the sov'reign sway:
In fourscore barks they plough the wat'ry way.

The proud Mycenè arms her martial pow'rs,
Cleonè, Corinth, with imperial tow'rs,

Fair Arætbyrea, Ornia's fruitful plain,
And Ægion, and Adrastus' ancient reign;
And those who dwell along the sandy shore,
And where Pellenè yields her fleecy store,
Where Helicè and Hyperesia lie,
And Gonoëssa's spires salute the sky.
Great Agamemnon rules the num'rous band,
A hundred vessels in long order stand,
And crowded nations wait his dread command.
High on the deck the king of men appears,
And his refulgent arms in triumph wears;
Proud of his host, unrivall'd in his reign,
In silent pomp he moves along the main.
His brother follows, and to vengeance warms
The hardy Spartans, exercis'd in arms:
Phare's and Brysia's valiant troops, and those
Whom Lacedæmon's lofty hills enclose;
Or Messe's tow'rs for silver doves renown'd,
Amyclæ, Laäs, Augia's happy ground,
And those whom Oetylos' low walls contain,
And Helos, on the margin of the main:
These, o'er the bending ocean, Helen's cause,
In sixty ships with Menelaüs draws:
Eager and loud from man to man he flies,
Revenge and fury flaming in his eyes;

While vainly fond, in fancy oft he hears
The fair one's grief, and sees her falling tears.
In ninety sail, from Pilos' sandy coast,
Nestor the sage conducts his chosen host:
From Amphigenia's ever-fruitful land;
Where Æpy high, and little Pteleon stand;
Where beauteous Arenè her structures shows,
And Thryon's walls Alphëus' streams enclose:
And Dorion, fam'd for Thamyris' disgrace,
Superior once of all the tuneful race,
Till, vain of mortals' empty praise, he strove
To match the seed of cloud-compelling Jove!
Too daring bard! whose unsuccessful pride
Th' immortal muses in their art defy'd.
Th' avenging muses of the light of day
Depriv'd his eyes, and snatch'd his voice away;
No more his heav'nly voice was heard to sing,
His hand no more awak'd the silver string.
Where under high Cyllenè, crown'd with wood,
The shaded tomb of old Æpytus stood;
From Ripè, Stratie, Tegea's bord'ring towns,
The Phenean fields, and Orchomenian downs,
Where the fat herds in plenteous pasture rove;
And Stymphelus with her surrounding grove;

Parrhasia, on her snowy cliffs reclin'd,
And high Enispè shook by wint'ry wind,
And fair Mantinea's ever-pleasing site;
In sixty sail th' Arcadian bands unite.
Bold Agapenor, glorious at their head,
(Ancœus' son) the mighty squadron led.
Their ships, supply'd by Agamemnon's care,
Through roaring seas the wond'ring warriors bear;
The first to battle on th' appointed plain,
But new to all the dangers of the main.
Those, where fair Elis and Buprasium join;
Whom Hyrmin, here, and Myrsinus confine,
And bounded there, where o'er the valleys rose
Th' Olenian rock; and where Alisium flows;
Beneath four chiefs (a num'rous army) came:
The strength and glory of th' Epean name.
In sep'rate squadrons these their train divide,
Each leads ten vessels through the yielding tide.
One was Amphimachus, and Thalpius one;
(Eurytus' this, and that Teätus' son)
Diores sprung from Amarynceus' line;
And great Polyxenus, of force divine.
But those who view fair Elis o'er the seas
From the bless'd islands of th' Echinades,

In forty vessels under Meges move,
Begot by Phyleus the belov'd of Jove.
To strong Dulichium from his sire he fled,
And thence to Troy his hardy warriors led.
Ulysses follow'd through the wat'ry road,
A chief, in wisdom equal to a god.
With those whom Cephalenia's isle enclos'd;
Or till their fields along the coast oppos'd;
Or where fair Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
Where high Neritos shakes his waving woods,
Where Ægilipa's rugged sides are seen,
Crocylia rocky, and Zacynthus green.
These in twelve galleys with vermilion prores,
Beneath his conduct sought the Phrygian shores.
Thoas came next, Andræmon's valiant son,
From Pleuron's walls, and chalky Calydon,
And rough Pylenè, and th' Olenian steep,
And Chalcis beaten by the rolling deep.
He led the warriors from th' Ætolian shore,
For now the sons of Oeneus were no more!
The glories of the mighty race were fled!
Oeneus himself, and Meleager dead!
To Thoas' care now trust the martial train,

Next eighty barks the Cretan king commands,
Of Gnossus, Lyctus, and Gortyna's bands,
And those who dwell where Rhytion's domes arise,
Or white Lycastus glitters to the skies,
Or where by Phæstus silver Jardan runs;
Crete's hundred cities pour forth all her sons.
These march'd, Idomeneus, beneath thy care,
And Merion, dreadful as the god of war.
Tlepolemus, the son of Hercules,
Led nine swift vessels through the foamy seas;
From Rhodes with everlasting sunshine bright,
Jalyssus, Lindus, and Camirus white.
His captive mother fierce Alcides bore
From Ephyr's walls and Selle's winding shore,
Where mighty towns in ruins spread the plain,
And saw their blooming warriors early slain.
The hero, when to manly years he grew,
Alcides' uncle, old Licymnius, slew;
For this, constrain'd to quit his native place,
And shun the vengeance of th' Herculean race,
A fleet he built, and with a num'rous train
Of willing exiles wander'd o'er the main;
Where many seas, and many suff'rings past,
On happy Rhodes the chief arriv'd at last:

There in three tribes divides his native band,
And rules them peaceful in a foreign land;
Increas'd and prosper'd in their new abodes
By mighty Jove, the sire of men and gods;
With joy they saw the growing empire rise,
And show'rs of wealth descending from the skies.

Three ships with Nireus sought the Trojan shore;
Nireus, whom Agläe to Charopus bore,
Nireus, in faultless shape and blooming grace,
The loveliest youth of all the Grecian race;
Pelides only mateh'd his early charms;
But few his troops, and small his strength in arms.

Next thirty galleys cleave the liquid plain,
Of those Calydnæ's sea-girt isles contain;
With them the youth of Nisyrus repair,
Casus the strong, and Crapathus the fair;
Cos, where Eurypylus possess'd the sway,
Till great Alcides made the realms obey:
These Antiphus and bold Phidippus bring,
Sprung from the god by Thessalus the king.

Now, muse, recount Pelasgic Argos' pow'rs,
From Alos, Alopè, and Trechin's tow'rs:
From Phthia's spacious vales; and Hella, blest
With female beauty far beyond the rest.

Full fifty ships beneath Achilles' care,
Th' Achaians, Myrmidons, Hellenians bear;
Thessalians all, though various in their name;
The same their nation, and their chief the same
But now inglorious, stretch'd along the shore,
They hear the brazen voice of war no more;
No more the foe they face in dire array:
Close in his fleet the angry leader lay;
Since fair Briseïs from his arms was torn,
The noblest spoil from sack'd Lyrnessus borne,
Then, when the chief the Theban walls o'erthrew,
And the bold sons of great Evenus slew.
There mourn'd Achilles, plung'd in depth of care,
But soon to rise in slaughter, blood, and war.

To these the youth of Phylacè succeed,
Itona, famous for her fleecy breed,
And grassy Pteleon deck'd with cheerful greens,
The bow'rs of Ceres, and the sylvan scenes,
Sweet Pyrrhasus, with blooming flow'rets crown'd,
And Antron's wat'ry dens, and cavern'd ground.
These own'd as chief Protesilas the brave,
Who now lay silent in the gloomy grave:
The first who boldly touch'd the Trojan shore,
And dy'd a Phrygian lance with Grecian gore;

There lies, far distant from his native plain;
Unfinish'd, his proud palaces remain,
And his sad consort beats her breast in vain.
His troops in forty ships Podarces led,
Iphiclus' son, and brother to the dead;
Nor he unworthy to command the host;
Yet still they mourn'd their ancient leader lost.

The men who Glaphyra's fair soil partake,
Where hills encircle Bœbe's lowly lake,
Where Phære hears the neighb'ring waters fall,
Or proud Iölcus lifts her airy wall,
In ten black ships embark'd for Ilion's shore,
With bold Eumelus, whom Alcestè bore:
All Pelias' race Alcestè far outshin'd,
The grace and glory of the beauteous kind.

The troops Methonè, or Thaumacia yields,
Olizon's rocks, or Melibœa's fields,
With Philoctetes sail'd, whose matchless art
From the tough bow directs the feather'd dart.
Sev'n were his ships; each vessel fifty row,
Skill'd in his science of the dart and bow.
But he lay raging on the Lemnian ground,
A pois'nous hydra gave the burning wound;
There groan'd the chief in agonizing pain,
Whom Greece at length shall wish, nor wish in vain.

His forces Medon led from Lemnos' shore,
Oïleus' son, whom beauteous Rhena bore.
Th' Oechalian race, in those high tow'rs contain'd
Where once Eurytus in proud triumph reign'd,
Or where her humbler turrets Tricca rears,
Or where Ithomè, rough with rocks, appears,
In thirty sail the sparkling waves divide,
Which Podalirius and Machaon guide.
To these his skill their parent-god imparts,
Divine professors of the healing arts.
The bold Ormenian and Asterian bands
In forty barks Eurypylus commands,
Where Titan hides his hoary head in snow,
And where Hyperia's silver fountains flow.
Thy troops, Argissa, Polypœtes leads,
And Eleon, shelter'd by Olympus' shades,
Gyrtonè's warriors; and where Orthè lies,
And Oleösson's chalky cliffs arise.
Sprung from Pirithous of immortal race,
The fruit of fair Hippodamè's embrace,
(That day, when hurl'd from Pelion's cloudy head,
To distant dens the shaggy centaurs fled)
With Polypœtes join'd in equal sway
Leonteus leads, and forty ships obey.

In twenty sail the bold Perrhæbians came
From Cyphus, Guneus was their leader's name.
With these the Enians join'd, and those who freeze
Where cold Dodona lifts her holy trees;
Or where the pleasing Titaresius glides,
And into Peneus rolls his easy tides;
Yet o'er the silver surface pure they flow,
The sacred stream unmix'd with streams below,
Sacred and awful! From the dark abodes
Styx pours them forth, the dreadful oath of gods!
Last under Prothöus the Magnesians stood,
Prothöus the swift, of old Tenthredon's blood;
Who dwell where Pelion, crown'd with piny boughs,
Obscures the glade, and nods his shaggy brows;
Or where thro' flow'ry Tempè Peneus stray'd:
(The region stretch'd beneath his mighty shade)
In forty sable barks they stemm'd the main;
Such were the chiefs, and such the Grecian train.
Say next, O muse! of all Achaia breeds,
Who bravest fought, or rein'd the noblest steeds?
Eumelus' mares were foremost in the chace,
As eagles fleet, and of Pheretian race;
Bred where Pieria's fruitful fountains flow,
And train'd by him who bears the silver bow.

Fierce in the fight their nostrils breath'd a flame,
Their height, their colour, and their age the same;
O'er fields of death they whirl the rapid car,
And break the ranks, and thunder thro' the war.
Ajax in arms the first renown acquir'd,
While stern Achilles in his wrath retir'd:
(His was the strength that mortal might exceeds,
And his th' unrivall'd race of heav'nly steeds)
But Thetis' son now shines in arms no more;
His troops, neglected on the sandy shore,
In empty air their sportive jav'lins throw,
Or whirl the disk, or bend an idle bow:
Unstain'd with blood his cover'd chariots stand;
Th' immortal coursers graze along the strand;
But the brave chiefs th' inglorious life deplor'd,
And, wand'ring o'er the camp, requir'd their lord.
Now, like a deluge, cov'ring all around,
The shining armies sweep along the ground;
Swift as a flood of fire, when storms arise,
Floats the wide field, and blazes to the skies.
Earth groan'd beneath them; as when angry Jove
Hurls down the forky lightning from above,
On Arimè when he the thunder throws,
And fires Typhœus with redoubled blows,

Where Typhon, press'd beneath the burning load,
Still feels the fury of th' avenging god.
But various Iris, Jove's commands to bear,
Speeds on the wings of winds through liquid air;
In Priam's porch the Trojan chiefs she found,
The old consulting, and the youths around.
Polites' shape, the monarch's son, she chose,
Who from Æsetes' tomb observ'd the foes,
High on the mound; from whence in prospect lay
The fields, the tents, the navy, and the bay.
In this dissembled form, she hastes to bring
Th' unwelcome message to the Phrygian king.
Cease to consult, the time for action calls;
War, horrid war, approaches to your walls!
Assembled armies oft have I beheld;
But ne'er till now such numbers charg'd a field:
Thick as autumnal leaves or driving sand,
The moving squadrons blacken all the strand.
Thou, godlike Hector! all thy force employ,
Assemble all th' united bands of Troy;
In just array let ev'ry leader call
The foreign troops: this day demands them all.
The voice divine the mighty chief alarms;
The council breaks, the warriors rush to arms.

The gates unfolding pour forth all their train,
Nations on nations fill the dusky plain,
Men, steeds, and chariots shake the trembling ground;
The tumult thickens, and the skies resound.
Amidst the plain, in sight of Ilion, stands
A rising mount, the work of human hands;
(This for Myrinne's tomb th' immortals know,
Though call'd Bateïa in the world below)
Beneath their chiefs in martial order here,
Th' auxiliar troops and Trojan hosts appear.
The godlike Hector, high above the rest,
Shakes his huge spear, and nods his plumy crest:
In throngs around his native bands repair,
And groves of lances glitter in the air.
Divine Æneas brings the Dardan race,
Anchises' son, by Venus' stol'n embrace,
Born in the shades of Ida's secret grove;
(A mortal mixing with the queen of love)
Archilochus and Acamas divide
The warrior's toils, and combat by his side.
Who fair Zeleia's wealthy valleys till,
Fast by the foot of Ida's sacred hill,
Or drink, Æsepus, of thy sable flood,
Were led by Pandarus, of royal blood;

To whom his art Apollo deign'd to show,
Grac'd with the presents of his shafts and bow.
From rich Apæsus and Adrestia's tow'rs,
High Teree's summits, and Pityea's bow'rs;
From these the congregated troops obey
Young Amphius and Adrastus' equal sway;
Old Merops' sons; whom, skill'd in fates to come,
The sire forewarn'd, and prophesy'd their doom:
Fate urg'd them on! the sire forewarn'd in vain,
They rush'd to war, and perish'd on the plain.
From Practius' stream, Percote's pasture lands,
And Sestos and Abydos' neighb'ring strands,
From great Arisba's walls and Selle's coast,
Asius Hyrtacides conducts his host:
High on his car he shakes the flowing reins,
His fiery coursers thunder o'er the plains.
The fierce Pelasgi next, in war renown'd,
March from Larissa's ever-fertile ground:
In equal arms their brother leaders shine,
Hippothous bold, and Pyleus the divine.
Next Acamas and Pyrous lead their hosts,
In dread array, from Thracia's wint'ry coasts;
Round the bleak realms where Hellespontus roars,
And Boreas beats the hoarse-resounding shores.

With great Euphemus the Ciconians move,
Sprung from Trœzenian Ceüs, lov'd by Jove.
Pyræchmes the Pæonian troops attend,
Skill'd in the fight their crooked bows to bend;
From Axius' ample bed he leads them on,
Axius, that laves the distant Amydon,
Axius, that swells with all his neighb'ring rills,
And wide around the floating region fills.
The Paphlagonians Pylæmenes rules,
Where rich Henetia breeds her savage mules,
Where Erythinus' rising clifts are seen,
Thy groves of box, Cytorus! ever green,
And where Ægialus and Cromna lie,
And lofty Sesamus invades the sky,
And where Parthenius, roll'd thro' banks of flow'rs,
Reflects her bord'ring palaces and bow'rs.
Here march'd in arms the Halizonian band,
Whom Odius and Epistrophus command,
From those far regions where the sun refines
The rip'ning silver in Alybean mines.
There, mighty Chromis led the Mysian train,
And augur Ennomus, inspir'd in vain;
For stern Achilles lopp'd his sacred head,
Roll'd down Scamander with the vulgar dead.

Phorcys and brave Ascanius here unite
Th' Ascanian Phrygians, eager for the fight.
Of those who round Mæonia's realms reside,
Or whom the vales in shades of Tmolus hide,
Mestles and Antiphus the charge partake,
Born on the banks of Gyges' silent lake.
There, from the fields where wild Mæander flows,
High Mycalè, and Latmos' shady brows,
And proud Miletus, came the Carian throngs,
With mingled clamours, and with barb'rous tongues.
Amphimachus and Naustes guide the train,
Naustes the bold, Amphimachus the vain,
Who trick'd with gold, and glitt'ring on his car,
Rode like a woman to the field of war.
Fool that he was! by fierce Achilles slain,
The river swept him to the briny main:
There whelm'd with waves the gaudy warrior lies;
The valiant victor seiz'd the golden prize.
The forces last in fair array succeed,
Which blameless Glaucus and Sarpedon lead;
The warlike bands that distant Lycia yields,
Where gulphy Xanthus foams along the fields.

SELECT NOTES

TO

BOOK II.

V. 1. *Now pleasing sleep*, &c.] Aristotle tells us, in the twenty-sixth chapter of his Art of Poetry, that this place had been objected to by some critics in those times. They thought it gave a very ill idea of the military discipline of the Greeks, to represent a whole army unguarded, and all the leaders asleep: they also pretended it was ridiculous to describe all the gods sleeping besides Jupiter. To both these Aristotle answers, that nothing is more usual or allowable than that figure which puts 'all' for the 'greater part.' One may add, with respect to the latter criticism, that nothing could give a better image of the superiority of Jupiter to the other gods (or of the Supreme Being to all second causes) than the vigilancy here ascribed to him over all things divine and human.

V. 9. *Fly hence, deluding dream!*] It appears from Aristotle, Poet. cap. 26, that Homer was accused of impiety, for making Jupiter the author of a lie in this passage. It seems there were anciently these words in his speech to the dream; Διδομεν δε οἱ κυχῶ αρεσθαι, 'Let us give him great glory.' (Instead of which we have in the present copies, Τρωεσσι δε κηδε εφηπται.) But Hippias found a way to bring off Homer, only by placing the accent on the last syllable but one, Διδομεν, for Διδομεναι, the infinitive for the imperative; which amounts to no more than he bade the dream to promise him great glory. But Macrobius de Somnio Scip. lib. i. cap. 7, takes off this imputation entirely, and will not allow there was any lie in the case. 'Agamemnon (says he) was ordered by the dream to lead out 'all' the forces of the Greeks (Πανστδιη is the word), and promised the victory on that condition: now Achilles and his forces not being summoned to the assembly with the rest, that neglect absolved Jupiter from his promise.'

V. 33. *Draw forth th' embattled train*, &c.] The dream here

repeats the message of Jupiter in the same terms that he received it. It is no less than the father of gods and men who gives the order, and to alter a word were presumption. Homer constantly makes his envoys observe this practice, as a mark of decency and respect.

V. 93. *Now, valiant chiefs*, &c.] The best commentary extant upon the first part of this book is in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who has given us an admirable explication of this whole conduct of Agamemnon in his second treatise Περι εσχηματισμενων.

V. 111. *As from some rocky cleft.*] This is the first simile in Homer; and we may observe in general that he excels all mankind in the number, variety, and beauty of his comparisons. There are scarce any in Virgil which are not translated from him, and therefore when he succeeds best in them, he is to be commended but as an improver. Scaliger seems not to have thought of this, when he compares the similes of these two authors (as indeed they are the places most obvious to comparison).

V. 121. *Fame flies before.*] This assembly of the army is full of beauties: the lively description of their overspreading the field; the noble boldness of the figure when Fame is represented in person shining at their head: the universal tumult succeeded by a solemn silence: and lastly, the graceful rising of Agamemnon, all contribute to cast a majesty on this part. In the passage of the 'sceptre,' Homer has found an artful and poetical manner of acquainting us with the high descent of Agamemnon, and celebrating the hereditary right of his family; as well as finely hinted the original of his power to be derived from heaven, in saying the sceptre was first the gift of Jupiter. It is with reference to this, that, in the line where he first mentions it, he calls it Αφθιτον αιει, and accordingly it is translated in that place.

V. 138.] The great art of this speech is admirably displayed by Dionysius, in the remarks scattered through his two discourses Περι εσχηματισμενων.

V. 163. —— *Decay'd our vessels lie,*
And scarce ensure the wretched pow'r to fly.]

This, and some other passages, are here translated correspondent to the general air and sense of this speech, rather than just to the

letter. The telling them in this place how much their shipping was decayed, was a hint of their danger in returning, as Madam Dacier has remarked.

V. 175. *So roll the billows, &c.*] One may take notice that Homer in these two similitudes has judiciously made choice of the two most wavering and inconstant things in nature, to compare with the multitude; the waves and ears of corn. The first alludes to the noise and tumult of the people, in the breaking and rolling of the billows; the second to their taking the same course, like corn bending one way; and both to the easiness with which they are moved by every breath.

V. 243. *To one sole monarch.*] Those persons are under a mistake who would make this sentence a praise of absolute monarchy. Homer speaks it only with regard to a general of an army during the time of his commission. Nor is Agamemnon styled 'king of kings' in any other sense, than as the rest of the princes had given him the supreme authority over them in the siege. Aristotle defines a king, Στρατήγος γαρ ην ὁ δικαστης ὁ βασιλευς, και των προς Θεους Κυριος; 'Leader of the war, judge of controversies, and president of the ceremonies of the gods.' That he had the principal care of religious rites, appears from many places in Homer; and that his power was no where absolute but in war: for we find Agamemnon insulted in the council, but in the army threatening deserters with death. He was under an obligation to preserve the privileges of his country, pursuant to which kings are called by our author Δικασπολους, and Θεμιστοπολους, the dispensers or managers of justice. And Dionysius of Halicarnassus acquaints us, that the old Grecian kings, whether hereditary or elective, had a council of their chief men, as Homer and the most ancient poets testify; nor was it (he adds) in those times as in ours, when kings have a full liberty to do whatever they please. Dion. Hal. lib. ii. Hist.

Ver. 255. *Thersites only.*] The ancients have ascribed to Homer the first sketch of satiric or comic poetry, of which sort was his poem called Margites, as Aristotle reports. Though that piece be lost, this character of Thersites may give us a taste of his vein in that kind. But whether ludicrous descriptions ought

to have place in the epic poem, has been justly questioned: neither Virgil, nor any of the most approved ancients, have thought fit to admit them into their compositions of that nature; nor any of the best moderns, except Milton, whose fondness for Homer might be the reason of it.

V. 275. *Amidst the glories.*] It is remarked by Dionysius Halicarnassus, in his treatise of the Examination of Writers, that there could not be a better artifice thought on to recall the army to their obedience, than this of our author. When they were offended at their general in favour of Achilles, nothing could more weaken Achilles's interest than to make such a fellow as Thersites appear of his party, whose impertinence would give them a disgust of thinking or acting like him.

V. 284. *The Greeks and I.*] These boasts of himself are the few words which Dionysius objects to in the foregoing passage. I cannot but think the grave commentators here very much mistaken, who imagine Thersites in earnest in these vaunts, and seriously reprove his insolence. They seem to me manifest strokes of irony, which had rendered them so much the more improper in the mouth of Nestor, who was otherwise none of the least boasters himself. And considered as such, they are equal to the rest of the speech, which has an infinite deal of spirit, humour, and satire.

V. 348. *Unhappy monarch!* &c.] Quintilian, speaking of the various kinds of oratory which may be learned from Homer, mentions among the greatest instances the speeches in this book. 'Nonne vel unus liber quo missa ad Achillem legatio continetur, vel in primo inter duces illa contentio, vel dictæ in secundo sententiæ, omnes litium ac consiliorum explicat artes? Affectus quidem vel illos mites, vel hos concitatos, nemo erit tam indoctus, qui non suâ in potestate hunc autorem habuisse fateatur.' It is indeed hardly possible to find any where more refined turns of policy, or more artful touches of oratory.

V. 440. *How much thy years excel.*] Every one has observed how glorious an elogium of wisdom Homer has here given, where Agamemnon so far prefers it to valour, as to wish not for ten Ajaxes, or Achilleses, but only for ten Nestors. For the rest of

this speech, Dionysius has summed it up as follows. 'Agamemnon being now convinced the Greeks were offended at him, on account of the departure of Achilles, pacifies them by a generous confession of his fault; but then asserts the character of a supreme ruler, and with the air of command threatens the disobedient.' I cannot conclude this part of the speeches without remarking how beautifully they rise above one another, and how they more and more awaken the spirit of war in the Grecians. In this last there is a wonderful fire and vivacity, when he prepares them for the glorious toils they were to undergo by a warm and lively description of them. The repetition of the words in that part has a beauty, which (as well as many others of the same kind) has been lost by most translators.

V. 485. *And Menelaüs came unbid.*] The critics have entered into a warm dispute, whether Menelaüs was in the right or in the wrong, in coming uninvited: some maintaining it the part of an impertinent or a fool to intrude upon another man's table; and others insisting upon the privilege a brother or a kinsman may claim in this case. The English reader had not been troubled with the translation of this word Αὐδομαῖος, but that Plato and Plutarch have taken notice of the passage. The verse following this, in most editions, Ἦδεε γαρ κηλα θυμον, &c. being rejected as spurious by Demetrius Phalereus, is omitted here upon his authority.

V. 526. *The dreadful ægis, Jove's immortal shield.*] Homer does not expressly call it a shield in this place, but it is plain from several other passages that it was so. In the fifth Iliad, this ægis is described with a sublimity that is inexpressible. The figure of the gorgon's head upon it is there specified, which will justify the mention of the serpents in the translation here: the verses are remarkably sonorous in the original. The image of the goddess of battles blazing with her immortal shield before the army, inspiring every hero, and assisting to range the troops, is agreeable to the bold painting of our author. And the encouragement of a divine power seemed no more than was requisite to change so totally the dispositions of the Grecians, as to make them now more ardent for the combat than they were before desirous of a

return. This finishes the conquest of their inclinations, in a manner at once wonderfully poetical, and correspondent to the moral which is every where spread through Homer, that nothing is entirely brought about but by the divine assistance.

V. 534. *As on some mountain*, &c.] The imagination of Homer was so vast and so lively, that whatsoever objects presented themselves before him impressed their images so forcibly that he poured them forth in comparisons equally simple and noble, without forgetting any circumstance which could instruct the reader, and make him see those objects in the same strong light wherein he saw them himself. And in this one of the principal beauties of poetry consists. Homer, on the sight of the march of this numerous army, gives us five similes in a breath, but all entirely different. The first regards the splendour of their armour, as a fire, &c. The second, the various movements of so many thousands before they can range themselves in battle array, like the swans, &c. The third respects their number, as the leaves or flowers, &c. The fourth, the ardour with which they run to the combat, like the legions of insects, &c. And the fifth, the obedience and exact discipline of the troops, ranged without confusion under their leaders, as flocks under their shepherds. This fecundity and variety can never be enough admired. DACIER.

V. 552. *Or thick as insects play.*] This simile translated literally runs thus: 'As the numerous troops of flies about a shepherd's cottage in the spring, when the milk moistens the pails; such numbers of Greeks stood in the field against the Trojans, desiring their destruction.' The lowness of this image, in comparison with those which precede it, will naturally shock a modern critic, and would scarce be forgiven in a poet of these times. The utmost a translator can do is to heighten the expression, so as to render the disparity less observable; which is endeavoured here, and in other places. If this be done successfully, the reader is so far from being offended at a low idea, that it raises his surprise to find it grown great in the poet's hands, of which we have frequent instances in Virgil's Georgics. Here follows another of the same kind, in the simile of Agamemnon to a bull, just after he has been compared to Jove, Mars, and Neptune. This, Eusta-

thius tells us, was blamed by some critics, and Mr. Hobbes has left it out in his translation. The liberty has been taken here to place the humbler simile first, reserving the noble one as a more magnificent close of the description; the bare turning the sentence removes the objection.

V. 568. *Great as the gods.*] Homer here describes the figure and port of Agamemnon with all imaginable grandeur, in making him appear clothed with the majesty of the greatest of the gods; and when Plutarch (in his second oration of the fortune of Alexander) blamed the comparison of a man to three deities at once, that censure was not passed upon Homer as a poet, but by Plutarch as a priest. This character of majesty, in which Agamemnon excels all the other heroes, is preserved in the different views of him throughout the Iliad. It is thus he appears on his ship in the catalogue; thus he shines in the eyes of Priam in the third book; thus again in the beginning of the eleventh; and so in the rest.

V. 572. *Say, virgins.*] It is hard to conceive any address more solemn, any opening to a subject more noble and magnificent, than this invocation of Homer before his catalogue. That omnipresence he gives to the muses, their post in the highest heaven, their comprehensive survey through the whole extent of the creation, are circumstances greatly imagined. Nor is any thing more perfectly fine, or exquisitely moral, than the opposition of the extensive knowledge of the divinities on the one side to the blindness and ignorance of mankind on the other. The greatness and importance of his subject is highly raised by his exalted manner of declaring the difficulty of it, 'Not though my lungs were brass,' &c. and by the air he gives, as if what follows were immediately inspired, and no less than the joint labour of all the muses.

V. 586. *The hardy warriors.*] The catalogue begins in this place, which I forbear to treat of at present: only I must acknowledge here that the translation has not been exactly punctual to the order in which Homer places his towns. However it has not trespassed against geography; the transpositions I mention being no other than such minute ones as Strabo confesses the author

himself is not free from: Ὁ δὲ Παυσ̃ης γενια μεν χωρας λεγει συνεχως, ὡσπερ και κειται. Οἰθ' ὑριην υνεμονῆο, και Αυλιδα, &c. Αλλο τι δ' ουχ ὡς εστι τη ταξει, Σκοινον τε Σκολον τε, Θισπειαν Γραιαν τε. Lib. 8. There is not, to my remembrance, any place throughout this catalogue omitted; a liberty which Mr. Dryden has made no difficulty to take, and to confess, in his Virgil. But a more scrupulous care was owing to Homer, on account of that wonderful exactness and unequalled diligence, which he has particularly shewn in this part of his work.

V. 649. *Down their broad shoulders*, &c.] The Greek has ὀπιθεν κομοωντες, 'à tergo comantes.' It was the custom of these people to shave the forepart of their heads, which they did that their enemies might not take the advantage of seizing them by the hair: the hinder part they let grow, as a valiant race that would never turn their backs. Their manner of fighting was hand to hand, without quitting their javelins (in the manner of our pike-men). Plutarch tells us this in the life of Theseus, and cites, to strengthen the authority of Homer, some verses of Archilocus to the same effect. Eobanus Hessus, who translated Homer into Latin verse, was therefore mistaken in his version of this passage.

'Præcipuè jaculatores, hastamque periti
Vibrare, et longis contingere pectora telis.'

V. 711. *Eager and loud from man to man he flies.*] The figure Menelaüs makes in this place is remarkably distinguished from the rest, and sufficient to shew his concern in the war was personal, while the others acted only for interest or glory in general. No leader in all the list is represented thus eager and passionate; he is louder than them all in his exhortations; more active in running among the troops; and inspirited with the thoughts of revenge, which he still increases with the secret imagination of Helen's repentance. This behaviour is finely imagined.

The epithet βοην αγαθος, which is applied in this and other places to Menelaüs, and which literally signifies 'loud-voiced,' is made by the commentators to mean 'valiant,' and translated 'bello strenuus.' The reason given by Eustathius is, that a loud

voice is a mark of strength; the usual effect of fear being to cut short the respiration. I own this seems to be forced, and rather believe it was one of those kind of sirnames given from some distinguishing quality of the person (as that of a loud voice might belong to Menelaüs) which Mons. Boileau mentions in his ninth reflection upon Longinus; in the same manner as some of our kings were called Edward Long-shanks, William Rufus, &c. But however it be, the epithet taken in the literal sense has a beauty in this verse from the circumstances Menelaüs is described in, which determined the translator to use it.

V. 746. *New to all the dangers of the main*] The Arcadians being an inland people were unskilled in navigation, for which reason Agamemnon furnished them with shipping. From hence, and from the last line of the description of the sceptre, where he is said to preside over 'many islands,' Thucydides takes occasion to observe that Agamemnon was superior in power to the rest of the princes of Greece, on account of his naval forces, which had rendered him master of the sea. THUCYD. lib. 1.

V. 815. *Three ships with Nireus.*] This leader is no where mentioned but in these lines, and is an exception to the observation of Macrobius, that all the persons of the catalogue make their appearance afterwards in the poem. Homer himself gives us the reason, because Nireus had but a small share of worth and valour; his quality only gave him a privilege to be named among men. The poet has caused him to be remembered no less than Achilles or Ulysses, but yet in no better manner than he deserved whose only qualification was his beauty: it is by a bare repetition of his name three times, which just leaves some impression of him on the mind of the reader. Many others, of as trivial memory as Nireus, have been preserved by poets from oblivion; but few poets have ever done this favour to want of merit with so much judgment. Demetrius Phalereus περὶ Ἑρμηνείας, sect. 61, takes notice of this beautiful repetition, which in a just deference to so delicate a critic is here preserved in the translation.

V. 871. *The grace and glory of the beauteous kind*] He gives Alcestis this elogy of the glory of her sex, for her conjugal piety, who died to preserve the life of her husband Admetus. Euripides

has a tragedy on this subject, which abounds in the most masterly strokes of tenderness: in particular the first act, which contains the description of her preparation for death, and of her behaviour in it, can never be enough admired.

V. 906. *In twenty sail the bold Perrhæbians came.*] I cannot tell whether it be worth observing that, except Ogilby, I have not met with one translator who has exactly preserved the number of the ships. Chapman puts eighteen under Eumelus instead of eleven: Hobbes but twenty under Ascalaphus and Ialmen instead of thirty, and but thirty under Menelaüs instead of sixty: Valterie (the former French translator) has given Agapenor forty for sixty, and Nestor forty for ninety: Madam Dacier gives Nestor but eighty. I must confess this translation not to have been quite so exact as Ogilby's, having cut off one from the number of Eumelus's ships, and two from those of Guneus: eleven and two and twenty would sound but oddly in English verse, and a poem contracts a littleness by insisting on such trivial niceties.

V. 950. *As when angry Jove.*] The comparison preceding this, of a fire which runs through the corn and blazes to heaven, had expressed at once the dazzling of their arms and the swiftness of their march. After which Homer having mentioned the sound of their feet, superadds another simile, which comprehends both the ideas of the brightness and the noise: for here (says Eustathius) the earth appears to burn and groan at the same time. Indeed the first of these similes is so full and so noble, that it scarce seemed possible to be exceeded by any image drawn from nature. But Homer, to raise it yet higher, has gone into the marvellous, given a prodigious and supernatural prospect, and brought down Jupiter himself, arrayed in all his terrors, to discharge his lightnings and thunders on Typhœus. The poet breaks out into this description with an air of enthusiasm, which greatly heightens the image in general, while it seems to transport him beyond the limits of an exact comparison. And this daring manner is particular to our author above all the ancients, and to Milton above all the moderns.

V. 1012. *From Practius' stream, Percote's pasture lands.*] Homer does not expressly mention Practius as a river, but Strabo,

lib. 13, tells us it is to be understood so in this passage. The appellative of pasture lands to Percote is justified in the xvth Iliad, v. 646, where Melannippus, the son of Hicetaon, is said to feed his oxen in that place.

V. 1032. *Axius, that swells with all his neighb'ring rills.*] According to the common reading, this verse should be translated, 'Axius that diffuses his beautiful waters over the land.' But we are assured by Strabo that Axius was a muddy river, and that the ancients understood it thus, 'Axius that receives into it several beautiful rivers.' The criticism lies in the last words of the verse, Ἀξιὸς, which Strabo reads Αἰσὸς, and interprets of the river Æa, whose waters were poured into Axius. However Homer describes this river agreeable to the vulgar reading in Il. xx. v. 158, Ἀξιὸς, ὃς κάλλιστον ὕδωρ ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἵησιν. This version takes in both.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

CATALOGUE.

If we look upon this piece with an eye to ancient learning, it may be observed, that, however fabulous the other parts of Homer's poem may be, according to the nature of epic poetry, this account of the people, princes, and countries, is purely historical, founded on the real transactions of those times, and by far the most valuable piece of history and geography left us concerning the state of Greece in that early period. Greece was then divided into several dynasties, which our author has enumerated under their respective princes; and his division was looked upon so exact, that we are told of many controversies, concerning the boundaries of Grecian cities, which have been decided upon the authority of this piece. Eustathius has collected together the following instances. The city of Calydon was adjudged to the Ætolians, notwithstanding the pretensions of Æolia, because Homer had ranked it among the towns belonging to the former. Sestos was given to those of Abydos, upon the plea that he had said the Abydonians were possessors of Sestos, Abydos, and Arisbe. When the Milesians and people of Priene disputed their claim to Mycale, a verse of Homer carried it in favour of the Milesians. And the Athenians were put in possession of Salamis

by another which was cited by Solon, or (as some think) interpolated by him for that purpose. Nay, in so high estimation has this catalogue been held, that (as Porphyry has written) there have been laws in some nations for the youth to learn it by heart, and particularly Cerdias (whom Cuperus de Apophth. Homer. takes to be Cercydus, a lawgiver of the Megalopolitans) made it one to his countrymen.

But if we consider the catalogue purely as poetical, it will not want its beauties in that light. Rapin, who was none of the most superstitious admirers of our author, reckons it among those parts which had particularly charmed him. We may observe first, what an air of probability is spread over the whole poem by the particularising of every nation and people concerned in this war. Secondly, what an entertaining scene he presents to us, of so many countries drawn in their liveliest and most natural colours; while we wander along with him amidst a beautiful variety of towns, havens, forests, vineyards, groves, mountains, and rivers; and are perpetually amused with his observations on the different soils, products, situations, or prospects. Thirdly, what a noble review he passes before us of so mighty an army, drawn out in order troop by troop; which, had the number only been told in the gross, had never filled the reader with so great a notion of the importance of the action. Fourthly, the description of the differing arms and manner of fighting of the soldiers, and the various attitudes he has given to the commanders: of the

leaders, the greatest part are either the immediate sons of gods, or the descendants of gods; and how great an idea must we have of a war, to the waging of which so many demigods and heroes are assembled? Fifthly, the several artful compliments he paid by this means to his own country in general, and many of his contemporaries in particular, by a celebration of the genealogies, ancient seats, and dominions of the great men of his time. Sixthly, the agreeable mixture of narrations from passages of history or fables, with which he amuses and relieves us at proper intervals. And lastly, the admirable judgment wherewith he introduces this whole catalogue, just at a time when the posture of affairs in the army rendered such a review of absolute necessity to the Greeks; and in a pause of action, while each was refreshing himself to prepare for the ensuing battles.

Macrobius in his Saturnalia, lib. v. cap. 15, has given us a judicious piece of criticism, in the comparison betwixt the catalogues of Homer and Virgil, in which he justly allows the preference to our author, for the following reasons. Homer (says he) has begun his description from the most noted promontory of Greece (he means that of Aulis, where was the narrowest passage to Euboea). From thence with a regular progress he describes either the maritime or mediterranean towns, as their situations are contiguous: he never passes with sudden leaps from place to place, omitting those which lie between; but proceeding like a traveller in the way he has begun, con-

stantly returns to the place from whence he digressed, till he finishes the whole circle he designed. Virgil, on the contrary, has observed no order in the regions described in his catalogue, l. x. but is perpetually breaking from the course of the country in a loose and desultory manner. You have Clusium and Cosæ at the beginning, next Populonia and Ilva, then Pisæ, which lie at a vast distance in Etruria; and immediately after Cærete, Pyrgi, and Graviscæ, places adjacent to Rome: from hence he is snatched to Liguria, then to Mantua. The same negligence is observable in his enumeration of the aids that followed Turnus in l. 7. Macrobius next remarks, that all the persons who are named by Homer in his catalogue are afterwards introduced in his battles; and whenever any others are killed, he mentions only a multitude in general. Whereas Virgil (he continues) has spared himself the labour of that exactness; for not only several whom he mentions in the list are never heard of in the war, but others make a figure in the war, of whom we had no notice in the list. For example, he specifies a thousand men under Massicus who came from Clusium, l. x. v. 167. Turnus soon afterwards is in the ship which had carried king Osinius from the same place, l. x. v. 655. This Osinius was never named before, nor is it probable a king should serve under Massicus. Nor indeed does either Massicus or Osinius ever make their appearance in the battles. He proceeds to instance several others, who, though celebrated for heroes in the catalogue, have no farther

notice taken of them throughout the poem. In the third place he animadverts upon the confusion of the same names in Virgil: as where Corinæus in the ninth book is killed by Asilas, v. 571, and Corinæus in the twelfth kills Ebusus, v. 298. Numa is slain by Nisus, l. ix. v. 454, and Æneas is afterwards in pursuit of Numa, l. x. v. 562. Æneas kills Camertes in the tenth book, v. 562, and Juturna assumes his shape in the twelfth, v. 224. He observes the same obscurity in his Patronymics. There is Palinurus Iasides, and Iapix Iacides, Hippocoon Hyrtacides, and Asylas Hyrtasides. On the contrary, the caution of Homer is remarkable, who having two of the name of Ajax, is constantly careful to distinguish them by Oïleus or Telamonius, the lesser or the greater Ajax.

I know nothing to be alledged in defence of Virgil, in answer to this author, but the common excuse that his Æneis was left unfinished. And upon the whole these are such trivial slips, as great wits may pass over, and little critics rejoice at.

But Macrobius has another remark, which one may accuse of evident partiality on the side of Homer. He blames Virgil for having varied the expression in his catalogue, to avoid the repetition of the same words, and prefers the bare and unadorned reiterations of Homer; who begins almost every article the same way, and ends perpetually, Μεσσηναι νηες ἑπονλο, &c. Perhaps the best reason to be given for this had been the artless manner of the first times, when such repetitions were not thought ungraceful.

This may appear from several of the like nature in the scripture; as in the twenty-sixth chapter of Numbers, where the tribes of Israel are enumerated in the plains of Moab, and each division recounted in the same words. So in the seventh chapter of the Revelations: 'Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand, &c.' But the words of Macrobius are, 'Has copias fortasse putat aliquis divinæ illi simplicitati præferendas. Sed nescio quo modo Homerum repetitio illa unicè decet, et est genio antiqui poetæ digna. This is exactly in the spirit, and almost in the cant of a true modern critic. The 'Simplicitas' the 'Nescio quo modo,' the 'Genio antiqui poetæ digna,' are excellent general phrases for those who have no reasons. Simplicity is our word of disguise for a shameful unpoetical neglect of expression: the term of the 'Je ne sais quoi' is the very support of all ignorant pretenders to delicacy; and to lift up our eyes, and talk of the genius of an ancient, is at once the cheapest way of shewing our own taste, and the shortest way of criticising the wit of others our contemporaries.

One may add to the foregoing comparison of these two authors some reasons for the length of Homer's, and the shortness of Virgil's catalogues. As, that Homer might have a design to settle the geography of his country, there being no description of Greece before his days; which was not the case with Virgil. Homer's concern was to compliment Greece at a time when it was divided into many distinct states, each of which might expect a place in his catalogue: but

when all Italy was swallowed up in the sole dominion of Rome, Virgil had only Rome to celebrate. Homer had a numerous army, and was to describe an important war with great and various events, whereas Virgil's sphere was much more confined. The ships of the Greeks were computed at about one thousand two hundred, those of Æneas and his aids but at two and forty; and as the time of the action of both poems is the same, we may suppose the built of their ships, and the number of men they contained, to be much alike. So that if the army of Homer amounts to about a hundred thousand men, that of Virgil cannot be above four thousand. If any one be farther curious to know upon what this computation is founded, he may see it in the following passage of Thucydides, lib. i. 'Homer's fleet (says he) consisted of one thousand two hundred vessels: those of the Bœotians carried one hundred and twenty men in each, and those of Philoctetes fifty. By these I suppose Homer expressed the largest and the smallest size of ships, and therefore mentions no other sort. But he tells us of those who sailed with Philoctetes, that they served both as mariners and soldiers, in saying the rowers were all of them archers. From hence the whole number will be seen, if we estimate the ships at a medium between the greatest and the least.' That is to say, at eighty-five men to each vessel (which is the mean between fifty and a hundred and twenty) the total comes to a hundred and two thousand men. Plutarch was therefore in a mistake when he computed the men at a

hundred and twenty thousand, which proceeded from his supposing a hundred and twenty in every ship; the contrary to which appears from the abovementioned ships of Philoctetes, as well as from those of Achilles, which are said to carry but fifty men apiece, in the sixteenth Iliad, v. 207.

Besides Virgil's imitation of this catalogue, there has scarce been any epic writer but has copied after it; which is at least a proof how beautiful this part has been ever esteemed by the finest geniuses in all ages. The catalogues in the ancient poets are generally known, only I must take notice that the Phocian and Bœotian towns in the fourth Thebaid of Statius are translated from hence. Of the moderns, those who most excel, owe their beauty to the imitation of some single particular only of Homer. Thus the chief grace of Tasso's catalogue consists in the description of the heroes, without any thing remarkable on the side of the countries: of the pieces of story he has interwoven, that of Tancred's amour to Clorinda is ill placed, and evidently too long for the rest. Spenser's enumeration of the British and Irish rivers, in the eleventh canto of his fourth book, is one of the noblest in the world; if we consider his subject was more confined, and can excuse his not observing the order or course of the country; but his variety of description, and fruitfulness of imagination, are nowhere more admirable than in that part. Milton's list of the fallen angels in his first book is an exact imitation of Homer, as far as regards the digressions of history

and antiquities, and his manner of inserting them: in all else I believe it must be allowed inferior. And indeed what Macrobius has said to cast Virgil below Homer, will fall much more strongly upon all the rest.

I had some cause to fear that this catalogue, which contributed so much to the success of the author, should ruin that of the translator. A mere heap of proper names, though but for a few lines together, could afford little entertainment to an English reader, who probably could not be apprized either of the necessity or beauty of this part of the poem. There were but two things to be done to give it a chance to please him; to render the versification very flowing and musical, and to make the whole appear as much a landscape or piece of painting as possible. For both of these I had the example of Homer in general; and that of Virgil, who found the necessity in another age to give more into description, seemed to authorize the latter in particular. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in his discourse of the Structure and Disposition of Words, professes to admire nothing more than the harmonious exactness with which Homer has placed these words, and softened the syllables into each other, so as to derive music from a crowd of names, which have in themselves no beauty or dignity. I would flatter myself that I have practised this not unsuccessfully in our language, which is more susceptible of all the variety and power of numbers than any of the modern, and second to none but the Greek and Roman. For the latter point, I have ventured to open the pro-

spect a little, by the addition of a few epithets or short hints of description to some of the places mentioned; though seldom exceeding the compass of half a verse (the space to which my author himself generally confines these pictures in miniature). But this has never been done without the best authorities from the ancients, which may be seen under the respective names in the geographical table following.

The table itself I thought but necessary to annex to the map, as my warrant for the situations assigned in it to several of the towns. For in whatever maps I have seen to this purpose, many of the places are omitted, or else set down at random. Sophianus and Gerbelius have laboured to settle the geography of old Greece, many of whose mistakes were rectified by Laurenbergius. These however deserved a greater commendation than those who succeeded them; and particularly Sanson's map, prefixed to Du Pin's Bibliotheque Historique, is miserably defective both in omissions and false placings; which I am obliged to mention, as it pretends to be designed expressly for this catalogue of Homer. I am persuaded the greater part of my readers will have no curiosity this way, however they may allow me the endeavour of gratifying those few who have: the rest are at liberty to pass the two or three following leaves unread.

GEOGRAPHICAL TABLE

OF

THE TOWNS, &c.

IN

HOMER'S CATALOGUE OF GREECE,

WITH

THE AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR SITUATION,

AS PLACED IN THE MAP.

BŒOTIA, under five Captains, PENELEUS, &c.

CONTAINING

AULIS, a haven on the Eubœan sea opposite to Chalcis, where the passage to Eubœa is narrowest. Strabo, lib. ix.

Eteon; Homer describes it a hilly country, and Statius after him—'densamque jugis Eteonen iniquis.' Theb. vii.

Hyrie, a town and lake of the same name, belonging to the territory of Tanagra or Græa. Strab. l. ix.

Schœnos; it lay in the road between Thebes and Anthedon, 50 stadia from Thebes. Strab. Ibid.

Scholos, a town under mount Cytheron. Ibid.

Thespia, near Haliartus, under mount Helicon. Paus. Bœot. near the Corinthian bay. Strab. l. ix.

Græa, the same with Tanagra, 30 stadia from Aulis, on the Eubœan sea; by this place the river Asopus falls into that sea. Ibid.

Mycalessus, between Thebes and Chalcis. Paus. Bœot. near Tanagra or Græa. Strab. lib. ix. Famous for its pine-trees. 'Pinigeris Mycalessus in agris.' Statius, lib. vii.

Harma, close by Mycalessus. Strab. l. ix. This town as well as the former lay near

the road from Thebes to Chalcis. Paus Bœot. It was here that Amphiaraus was swallowed by the earth in his chariot, from whence it received its name. Strab. Ibid.

Ilesion; it was situate in the fens near Heleon and Hyle, not far from Tanagra. These three places took their names from being so seated (Ἕλος, Palu-). Strab. l. ix.

Erythræ, in the confines of Attica near Platæa. Thucyd. l. iii. — 'dites pecorum comitantur Erythræ.' Stat. Theb. vii.

Peteon, in the way from Thebes to Anthedon. Strab. l. ix.

Ocalea, in the mid-way betwixt Haliartus and Alalcomenes. Ibid.

Medeon, near Onchestus. Ibid.

Copæ, a town on the lake Copais, by the river Cephissus, next Orchomenus. Ibid.

Eutresis, a small town of the Thespians near Thisbe. Ibid.

Thisbe, under mount Helicon. Paus. Bœot.

Coroned, seated on the Cephissus, where it falls into the lake Copais. Strab. l. ix.

Haliartus, on the same lake, Strab. Ibid. Bordering on Coronea and Platæa. Paus. Bœot.

Platæa, between Cithæron and Thebes, divided from the latter by the river Asopus. Strab. l. ix. 'Viridesque Platæas.' Stat. Th. vii.

Glissa, in the territory of Thebes, abounding with vines. 'Baccho Glisanta colentes. Stat.'

Thebæ, situate between the rivers Ismenus and Asopus. Strab. l. ix.

Onchestus, on the lake Copais. The grove consecrated to Neptune in this place, and celebrated by Homer, together with a temple and statue of that god, were shewn in the time of Pausanias. Vide Bœot.

Arne, seated on the same lake, famous for vines. Strab. Hom.

Midea, on the same lake. Ibid.

Nissa, or *Nysa* (apud Statium), or according to Strabo, l. ix. Isa; near Anthedon.

Anthedon, a city on the sea-side, opposite to Eubœa, the utmost on the shore towards Locris. Strab. l. ix. 'Teque

ultima tractu Anthedon.' Statius, l. vii.

Aspledon, 20 stadia from Orchomenus. Strab. l. ix.

Orchomenus, and the plains about it, being the most spacious of all in Bœotia. (Plutarch in vit. Syllæ, circa medium.)

Homer distinguishes these two last from the rest of Bœotia. They were commanded by Ascalaphus and Ialmen.

PHOCIS, under SCHEDIUS and EPISTROPHUS,

CONTAINING

Cyparissus, the same with Anticyrrha according to Pausanias, on the bay of Corinth.

Pytho, adjoining to Parnassus: some think it the same with Delphi. Pausan. Phocic.

Crissa, a sea-town on the bay of Corinth near Cyrrha. Strab. l. ix.

Daulis, upon the Cephissus at the foot of Parnassus. Ibid.

Panopëa, upon the same river, adjoining to Orchomenia, just by Hyampolis or Anemoria. Ibid.

Hyampolis, *Anemoria*, both the same according to Strabo. Ibid. Confining upon Locris. Paus. Phoc.

Lilæa, at the head of the river Cephissus, just on the edge of Phocis. Ib.—'propellentemque Lilæam Cephissi glaciale caput.' Stat. l. vii.

LOCRIS, under AJAX OILEUS,

CONTAINING

Cynus, a maritime town towards Eubœa. Strab. l. ix.

Opus, a Locrian city, 15 stadia from the sea, adjacent to Panopëa in Phocis. Ib.

Calliarus.

Bessa, so called from being covered with shrubs. Strab. l. ix.

Scarphe, seated between Thronium and Thermopylæ, ten stadia from the sea. Ibid.

Augia.

Tarphe.

Thronius, on the Melian bay. Strab. l. ix.

Boagrius, a river that passes by Thronius, and runs into the

bay of Oeta, between Cynus and Scarphe. Ibid.

All these opposite to the isle of Euboea.

EUBŒA, under ELPHENOR,

CONTAINING

Chalcis, the city nearest to the continent of Greece, just opposite to Aulis in Bœotia. Strab. l. x.

Eretria, between Chalcis and Gerestus. Ibid.

Histiæa, a town with vineyards, over against Thessaly. Herod. l. vii.

Cerinthus, on the sea-shore. Hom. Near the river Budorus. Strab. l. x.

Dios, seated high. Hom. Near Histiœa. Strab. Ib.

Carystos, a city at the foot of the mountain Ocha. Strab. Ibid. Between Eretria and Gerestus. Ptolem. l. iii.

Styra, a town near Carystos. Strab. Ibid.

ATHENS, under MENESTHEUS.

The Isle of SALAMIS, under AJAX TELAMON.

PELOPONNESUS, the East Part divided into ARGIA and MYCENÆ, under AGAMEMNON,*

CONTAINS

Argos, 40 stadia from the sea. Paus. Corin.

Tyrinthe, between Argos and Epidaurus. Ibid.

Asinen, *Hermion*, *Trœzene*, three cities lying in this order on the bay of Hermione. Strab. l. viii. Paus. Corinth. Trœzene was seated high, and Asine a rocky coast.—'Altaque Trœzene.' Ov. Fast. ii.—'Quos Asinæ cautes.' Lucan, l. viii.

Elionæ was on the sea side,

* There seems to be an oversight in mentioning all the places which follow as under the dominion of Agamemnon, a considerable number being subject to Diomed and his associates, Sthenelus and Euryalus, as may be seen by a reference to the catalogue.

for Strabo tells us the people of Mycenæ made it a station for their ships, l. viii.

Epidaurus, a town and little island adjoining, in the inner part of the Saronic bay. Strab. l. viii. It was fruitful in vines in Homer's time.

The isle of *Ægina*, over-against Epidaurus.

Maseta belongs to the Argolic shore according to Strabo, who observes that Homer names it not in the exact order, placing it with Ægina. Strab. l. viii.

Mycenæ, between Cleone and Argos. Strab. Pausan.

Corinth, near the Isthmus.

Cleone, between Argos and Corinth. Paus. Corinth.

Ornia, on the borders of Sicyonia. Ibid.

Arethyria, the same with Phlyasia, at the source of the Achaian Asopus. Strab. l. viii.

Sicyon (anciently the kingdom of Adrastus) betwixt Corinth and Achaia. Paus. Corinth.

Hyperesia, the same with Ægira, says Pausan. Achaic. Seated betwixt Pellene and Helice. Strab. l. viii. Opposite to Parnassus. Polyb. l. iv.

Gonoessa; Homer describes it situate very high, and Seneca Troas. 'Cares nunquam Gonoessa vento.'

Pellene, bordering on Sicyon and Pheneus, 60 stadia from the sea. Paus. Arcad. Celebrated anciently for its wool. Strab. l. viii. Jul. Pol.

Ægium, *Elice*, next Sicyon lies Pellene, &c. then Helice, and next to Elice, Ægium. Strab. l. viii. Helice lies on the sea-side, 40 stadia from Ægium. Paus. Ach.

The West Part of PELOPONNESUS, divided into LACONIA, MESSENIA, ARCADIA, and ELIS.

LACONIA, under MENELAUS,

CONTAINING

Sparta, the capital city, on the river Eurotas.

Phares, on the bay of Messenia. Strab. l. viii.

Messa; Strabo thinks this a contraction of Messena, and Statius in his imitation of this catalogue, lib. iv. calls it so.

Brysia, under mount Taygetus. Paus. Lacon.

Augia, the same with Ægiæ in the opinion of Pausanias (Laconicis), 30 stadia from Gythium.

Amyclæ, 20 stadia from Sparta towards the sea. Ptol. l. iv. under the mountain Taygetus. Strab. l. viii.

Helos, on the sea-side. Hom. Upon the river Eurotas. Strab. Ibid.

Laas.

Oetylos, near the promontory of Tænarus. Paus. Lac.

MESSENIA, under NESTOR,

CONTAINING

Pylos, the city of Nestor, on the sea-shore.

Arene, seated near the river Minyeius. Hom. Il. xi. Strab. l. viii.

Thryon, on the river Alpheus, the same which Homer elsewhere calls Thryoessa. Strab. Ibid.

Æpy, the ancient geographers differ about the situation of this town, but agree to place it near the sea. Vide Strab. l. viii. — 'Summis ingestum montibus Æpy.' Stat. l. iv.

Cyparisie, on the borders of Messenia, and upon the bay called from it Cyparissæus. Paus. Messen.

Amphigenia,—'Fertilis Amphigenia.' Stat. Th. iv. near the former. So also Pteleon, which was built by a colony from Pteleon in Thessaly. Strab. l. viii.

Helos, near the river Alpheus. Ibid.

Dorion, a field or mountain near the sea. Ibid.

ARCADIA, under AGAPENOR,

CONTAINING

The mountain *Cyllene*, the highest of Peloponnesus, on the borders of Achaia and Arcadia, near Pheneus. Paus. Arcad. Under this stood the tomb of Æpytus. That mo-

nument, the same author tells us, was remaining in his time; it was only a heap of earth enclosed with a wall of rough stone.

Pheneus, confining on Pellene, and Stymphelus. Ibid.

Orchomenus, confining on Pheneus and Mantinœa. Ib.

Ripe, *Stratie*, *Enispe*; these three, Strabo tells us, are not to be found, nor their situation assigned. Lib. viii. prope fin. Enispe stood high, as appears from Hom. and Statius, l. iv. 'Ventosaque donat Enispe.'

Tegea, between Argos and Sparta. Polyb. l. iv.

Mantinœa, bordering upon Tegea, Argia, and Orchomenus. Paus. Arcad.

Stymphelus, confining on Phlyasia or Arethyria. Strab. l. viii.

Parrhasia, adjoining to Laconia. Thucyd. l. v.—'Parrhasiæque nives.' Ovid. Fast. ii.

ELIS, under four Leaders, AMPHIMACHUS, &c.

CONTAINING

The city *Elis*, 120 stadia from the sea. Paus. Eliacis ii.

Buprasium near Elis. Stra. l. viii.

The places bounded by the fields of Hyrmine, in the territory of Elis, between mount Cyllene and the sea.

Myrsinus, on the sea side, 70 stadia from Elis. Strabo, l. viii.

The *Olenian Rocks*, which stood near the city Olenos, at the mouth of the river Pierus. Paus. Achaic.

And *Alysium*, the name of a town or river, in the way from Elis to Pisa. Strab. l. viii.

The ISLES, over against the Continent of ELIS, ACHAIA, or ACARNANIA.

Echinades and *Dulichium*, under Meges.

The Cephalenians under Ulysses, being those from Samos (the same with Cephalenia), from Zacynthus, Crocylia, Ægilipa, Neritus, and Ithaca. This last is generally supposed to be the largest of these islands on the east side

of Cephalenia, and next to it; but that is, according to Wheeler, 20 Italian miles in circumference, whereas Strabo gives Ithaca but 80 stadia about. It was rather one of the lesser islands towards the mouth of the Achelons.

Hŏmer ădds to these places under the dominion of Ulysses, Epirus and the opposite continent, by which (as M. Dacier observes) cannot be meant Epirus properly so called, which was never subject to Ulysses, but only the sea-coast of Acarnania, opposite to the islands.

The Continent of ACARNANIA and ÆTOLIA, under THOAS.

Pleuron, seated between Chalcis and Calydon, by the sea-shore, upon the river Evenus, west of Chalcis. Strab. l. x.

Olenos, lying above Calydon, with the Evenus on the east of it. Ibid.

Pylene, the same with Proschion, not far from Pleuron, but more in the land. Strab. l. x.

Chalcis, a sea-town. Hom. Situate on the east side of Evenus. Strab. Ibid. There was another Chalcis at the head of the Evenus, called by Strabo Hypo-Chalcis.

Calydon, on the Evenus also. Ibid.

The Isle of CRETE, under IDOMENEUS,

CONTAINING

Gnossus, seated in the plain between Lyctus and Gortyna, 120 stadia from Lyctus. Strab. l. x.

Gortyna, 90 stadia from the African sea. Ibid.

Lyctus, 80 stadia from the same sea. Ibid.

Miletus.

Phestus, 60 stadia from Gortyna, 20 from the sea, under Gortyna. Strab. Ib. It lay on the river Jardan, as appears by Homer's description of it in the third book of the Odyssey.

Lycastus.

Rhytium, under Gortyna. Strab.

The Isle of RHODES, under TLEPOLEMUS,

CONTAINING

Lindus, on the right hand to those who sail from the city of Rhodes, southward. Strab. l. xiv.

Jalyssus, between Camirus and Rhodes. Ibid.

Camirus.

The Islands, SYMA (under NIREUS) NISYRUS, CARPATHUS, CASUS, COS, CALYDNÆ, under ANTIPHUS, and PHIDIPPUS.

The Continent of THESSALY, toward the ÆGEAN Sea, under ACHILLES.

Argos Pelasgicum (the same which was since called Phthiotis). Strabo, l. ix. says that some thought this the name of a town, others that Homer meant by it this part of Thessaly in general (which last seems most probable). Steph. Byzant. observes, there was a city Argos in Thessaly, as well as in Peloponnesus; the former was called Pelasgic in contradistinction to the Achaian: for though the Pelasgi possessed several parts of Epirus, Crete, Peloponnesus, &c. yet they retained their principal seat in Thessaly. Steph. Byz. in v. Panel.

Alos, Alope; both on the shore of Thessaly towards Locris. Strabo, l. ix. Alos lies in the passage of mount Othrys. Ibid.

Trechine, under the mountain Oeta. Eustath. in Il. ii.

Phthia, Hellas; some supposed these two to be names of the same place, as Strabo says; though it is plain Homer distinguishes them. Whether they were cities or regions, Strabo is not determined, lib. ix.

The *Hellenes*. This denomination, afterwards common to all the Greeks, is here to be understood only of those who

inhabited Phthiotis. It was not till long after Homer's time that the people of other cities of Greece, desiring assistance from these, began to have the same name from their communication with them, as Thucydides remarks in the beginning of his first book,

The following under PROTESILAUS.

Phyiace, on the coast of Phthiotis, toward the Melian bay. Strab. l. ix.

Pyrrhasus, beyond the mountain Othrys, had the grove of Ceres within two stadia of it. Ibid.

Itona, 60 stadia from Alos; it lay higher in the land than Pyrrhasus, above mount Othrys. Ibid.

Antron, on the sea-side. Hom. In the passage to Eubœa. Ibid.

Pteleon; the situation of this town in Strabo seems to be between Antron and Pyrrhasus: but Pliny describes it with great exactness to lie on the shore towards Bœotia, on the confines of Phthiotis, upon the river Sperchius; according to which particulars it must have been seated as I have placed it. Livy also seats it on the Sperchius.

All those towns which were under Protesilaus (says Strabo, lib. ix.), being the five last mentioned, lay on the eastern side of the mountain Othrys.

These under EUMELUS.

Pheræ, in the farthest part of Magnesia, confining on mount Pelion. Strab. l. ix. Near the lake of Bœbe. Ptol. And plentifully watered with the fountains of Hyperia. Strab.

Glaphyræ.

Iolcos, a sea-town on the Pegasæan bay. Livy, l. iv. and Strab.

Under PHILOCTETES.

Methone, a city of Macedonia, 40 stadia from Pydna in Pieria. Strab.

Thaumacia, Mœlibea; in Phthiotis near Pharsalus, according to the same author. Ibid.

Olyzon. It seems that this place lay near Bœbe, Iolcos, and Ormenium, from Strab. l. ix. where he says, Demetrius caused the inhabitants of these towns to remove to Demetrias, on the same coast.

The Upper THESSALY.

The following under PODALIRIUS and MACHAON.

Trice, or *Tricce*, not far from the mountain Pindus, on the left hand of the Peneus, as it runs from Pindus. Strab. lib. ix.

Ithome, near Trica. Ibid.

Oechalia, the situation not certain, somewhere near the forementioned towns. Strab. Ibid.

Under EURYPYLUS.

Ormenium, under Pelion, on the Pegasæan bay, near Bœbe. Ibid.

Asterium, hard by Pheræ and Titanus. Ibid.

Under POLYPŒTES.

Argissa, lying upon the river Peneus. Strab. lib. ix.

Gyrtone, a city of Perrhæbia, at the foot of Olympus. Ibid.

Orthe, near Peneus and Tempe. Ibid.

Elope, Oloosson, both lying under Olympus, near the river Titaresius. Ibid.

Under Gyneus and Prothöus.

Cyphus, seated in the mountainous country, towards Olympus. Ibid.

Dodona, among the mountains, towards Olympus. Ib.

Titaresius, a river rising in the mountain Tarus, near Olympus, and running into Peneus. Ibid. It is also called Eurotus.

The river Peneus rises from mount Pindus, and flows through Tempe into the sea. Strab. l. vii. and ix.

Pelion, near Ossa, in Magnesia. Herod. l. vii.

A TABLE OF TROY,

AND THE

AUXILIAR COUNTRIES.

THE kingdom of Priam, divided into eight dynasties.

1. *Troas*, under Hector, whose capital was Ilion.

2. *Dardania*, under Æneas, the capital Dardanus.

3. *Zeleia*, at the foot of Ida, by the Æsepus, under Pandarus.

4. *Adrestia*, *Apæsus*, *Pityea*, Mount *Teree*, under Adrastus and Amphius.

5. *Sestos*, *Abydos*, *Arisbe*, on the river Selle, *Percote*, and *Practius*, under Asius.

These places lay between Troy and the Propontis.

The other three dynasties were under Mys, Eetion, and Alteus; the capital of the first was Lyrnessus, of the second Thebe of Cilicia, of the third Pedasus in Lelegia. Homer does not mention these in the catalogue, having been before destroyed and depopulated by the Greeks.

THE AUXILIAR NATIONS.

The *Pelasgi*, under Hippothous and Pyleus, whose capital was Larissa, near the place where Cuma was afterwards built. Strab. l. xiii.

The *Thracians*, by the side of the Hellespont opposite to Troy, under Acamas and Pyrous, and those of Ciconia, under Euphemus.

The *Pæonians* from Macedonia and the river Axius, under Pyræchmes.

The *Paphlagonians*, under Pylæmenes. The Halizonians, under Odius and Epistrophus. The Mysians, under Cromis and Ennomus. The Phrygians of Ascania, under Phorcys and Ascanius.

The *Mæonians*, under Mestles and Antiphus, who inhabited under the mountain Tmolus.

The *Carians*, under Nausto's and Amphimacus, from Miletus, the farthermost city of Caria towards the south. Hom. Il. i. Mycale, a mountain and promontory opposite to Samos. Ibid. Phthiron, the same mountain as Latmos, according to Hecatæus.

The *Lycians*, under Sarpedon and Glaucus, from the banks of the river Xanthus, which runs into the sea betwixt Rhodes and Cyprus. Homer mentions it to distinguish this Lycia from that which lies on the Propontis.

END OF VOL. I.

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